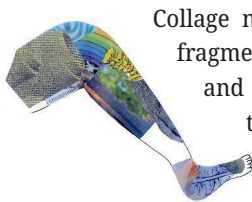


Naomi Lobnig and Marlies Lengauer

# The Autobiographical Self: Gender and Collage

**Step 1:** Collect a range of different materials (e.g., cutouts from magazines).

**Step 2:** Create a version of yourself in the form of a collage. Use the materials you have collected to assemble your body or the clothes you're wearing. Depict your body in three panels, each showing a different everyday situation (e.g., interacting with people you [don't] know, cooking, reading a book). If you like, the panels can form a sequence/narration.



Collage means selecting, cutting out, reinserting, and assembling fragments; in this process, meaning emerges through interaction and relationality: “The fluid image lives in collaboration, in the reworking, rethinking, and reformulation of works by others” (Szép 2020, 60). At the same time, the form of collage reveals its own processuality and inherent constructedness. Collage as an art form demonstrates structural

parallels to comics in that both can be seen as an “anti-establishment art form whose flexibility allows artists to illustrate complex subjective experiences in a lucid style” (Venkatesan and Kasthuri 2018, 69).

**Step 3:** When you are finished, you can think about the following questions: How did the process of collecting and selecting materials, and cutting, arranging, and gluing on the body (parts) make you feel? What might this mean in terms of (your) gender? How (and why) do bodies change from panel to panel or situation to situation? What must stay the same to enable recognizability?

“Collage precisely references the spaces in between and refuses to respect the boundaries that usually delineate self from other, art object from museum, and the copy from the original. [...] Collage has been used by many female artists [...] to the promise of transformation, not through a positive production of the image but through a negative destruction of it that nonetheless refuses to relinquish pleasure” (Halberstam 2011, 136).



## Bibliography

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