In this phenomenological study I explore the lived experiences of five K-12 teachers around prejudice and discrimination, both in their lives and in the school context. My research question asks, What is the lived experience of teachers as both other and otherer, as target and perpetrator? Embedded in this larger question are two sub-questions: 1) What are the teachers' experiences participating in and mitigating othering in the classroom? and 2) In what manner do they understand the shaping of their prior experiences as they participate in and mitigate othering in the classroom? My research is grounded in the philosophical writings of Levinas and Derrida, and I rely on van Manen to guide me through the methodology of phenomenology. I listen to the stories of teachers who share their personal experiences around othering, digging for meaning that contributes to my understanding of the process. In my preliminary conversations I explore the role of place and emotions in our relations with the other. The complexity of identity begins to unfold. The five participants in my study share vivid experiences around othering. Through their stories I come to understand that our experiences around othering have very much to do with our sense of self. My participants do not have consistent relationships with others. Their interactions seem very much influenced by their own identity development, their relationship to the other, and the strength of their memories. In the school context, my participants experience othering from parents, students, and colleagues, and they, too, other, but they remain committed to challenging acts of bias in the school. They move beyond the self, reaching out to their students-as-others, forming relationships that transform the classroom from a place of learning to a place of living, seeing, and being seen. Finally, from my participants' words, I draw implications for pre-service and in-service education programs, imagining how we can prepare teachers to reflect critically, thinking about their personal experiences around othering in ways that enable them to teach for transformation in their classrooms.
of Göttingen and Munich in Germany. It then spread to France, the United States, and elsewhere, often in contexts far removed from Husserl's early work.