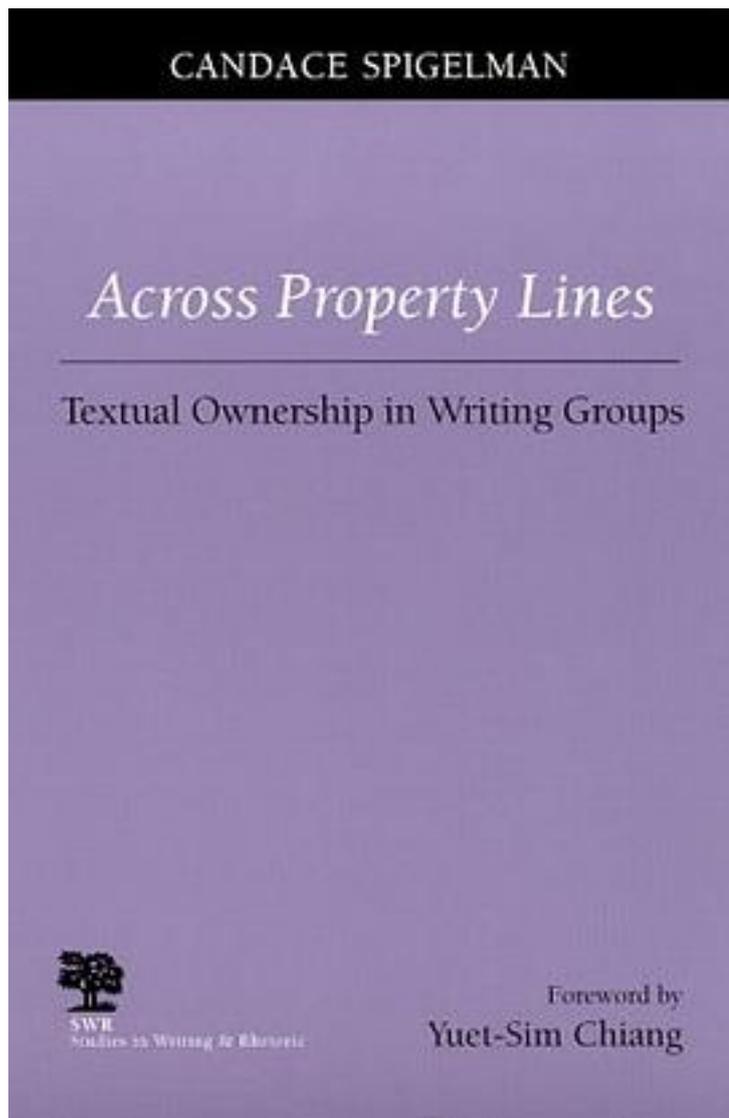


Across Property Lines



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Candace Spigelman investigates the dynamics of ownership in small group writing workshops, basing her findings on case studies involving two groups: a five-member creative writing group meeting monthly at a local Philadelphia coffee bar and a four-member college-level writing group meeting in their composition classroom. She explores the relationship between particular notions of intellectual property within each group as well as the effectiveness of writing groups that embrace these notions. Addressing the negotiations between the public and private domains of writing within these groups, she discovers that for both the committed writers and the novices, "values associated with textual ownership play a crucial role in writing group performance." Spigelman discusses textual ownership, intellectual property, and writing group processes and then reviews theories relating to authorship and knowledge making. After introducing the participants in each group, discussing their texts, and describing their workshop sessions, she examines the writers' avowed and implied beliefs about exchanging ideas and protecting individual property rights. Spigelman stresses the necessary tension between individual and social aspects of writing practices: She argues for the need to foster more collaborative activity among student writers by replicating the processes of writers working in nonacademic settings but also contends that all writers must be allowed to imagine their individual agency and authority as they compose.

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