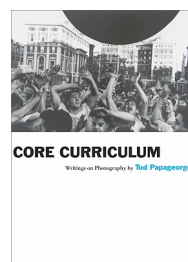


## *Core Curriculum: Writings on Photography* Tod Papageorge



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*Core Curriculum* is a volume of collected writing on photography. Papageorge, whose photographic practice matured on the streets of New York alongside Garry Winogrand and Lee Friedlander in the 1960s and 70s, has been teaching at Yale University School of Art since 1979, where he still leads the graduate programme, whose alumni include Philip-Lorca diCorsia, Abe Morrell and Gregory Crewdson.

The book includes eighteen different texts, including biographical lectures he delivers to students studying the 'Core Curriculum' module at Yale, catalogue essays, interviews (*with*, rather than *by* him) and other miscellaneous works. Like his aforementioned peers, Papageorge had a distain for some of the intellectual discourse on the medium at the time: he makes a detailed correction to Rosalind Krauss's critique of the presence of Atget's work in the gallery, in her essay 'Photography's Discursive Spaces', and offers a poem in response to Sontag's *On Photography* (although this is better articulated in the proceeding interview with Mark Durden).

Papageorge writes passionately about his contemporaries and other figures he admires, most notably in the three lectures. However, whilst this voice is the mark of an excellent educator, it doesn't translate comfortably into print. Also, the absence of most of the images he refers to is frustrating, giving a sense that you are only listening in on the presentations.

What distinguishes Papageorge's philosophy on photography from other writers is his persistent comparison of the medium to poetry, which he says, began when he saw some Cartier-Bresson images during his final semester studying literature and realised that he could use photography to make 'picture-poems.' There are frequent references to this relationship; some, he admits himself, to be slightly tenuous and most – because it's a survey – are repeated at least once. The book would also benefit from a freshly written conclusion to better assimilate these authoritative and insightful pieces, in place of the existing, somewhat sentimental one.