Art Education and Ethics Part I

1. Art education and social interaction Joseph Beuys’ notion of ‘social sculpture’ expanded our understanding of art to include political engagement and actions that aimed to transform society. In the last few decades, various international artists and artists’ groups have similarly encouraged collaborative practices that focus on process, social interaction and pedagogical projects rather than the production of commodified objects. Given the critical, experiential and community-driven organic nature of such practices, educational thinkers like Dewey and Freire have sometimes been referenced as sources of inspiration or theoretical frameworks while a variety of terms have been used to describe such developments: new-genre public art, dialogic aesthetics, relational aesthetics, socially engaged art and community art amongst others. How do these practices impact our understanding of art education and its aims? What can art education learn from practices that treat art as a process of exchange and dialogue?