

6. Finally, we would wish to argue that the hallmark of any profession is its responsibility for developing a critical analysis of itself and educating its members in that critical faculty. To leave any gaps, and in particular historical gaps in self-knowledge, poses the real question whether the profession is truly 'professional'. Whilst historical understanding and historical research and teaching cannot provide nursing with all its answers, it can provide nursing with some important questions and doubts. Before we can be sure of the present, let alone plan the future, we must discover the past.