**Claire’s thought processes when reading this abstract**

Harris, J. (2008) ‘State Social Work: Constructing the Present from Moments in the Past’ *British Journal of Social Work*.38 (4) pp.662-679.

Social work is often seen as a straightforward response to self-evident human needs and problems or as the outcome of ‘professional projects’ pursued by social workers. However, consideration of social work’s history suggests that it is a contingent activity, conditioned by and dependent upon the context from which it emerges and in which it engages. The contingent nature of social work is considered by locating it in the contexts of five historical ‘moments’ that have had significant implications for social work’s profile and practice: the nineteenth century origins of social work; social work in the post-war period; the Seebohm Report; the New Right; and New Labour. The review of these historical moments shows that welfare regimes are key in shaping the manner in which social work is constituted and enacted. Furthermore, aspects from each historical moment have been carried forward into present day social work; the construction of the present always owes something to moments from the past.

**Claire’s strategies for critically reading the features of the text**

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