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# The 'Tracking' Controversy: The Roots of Mentoring and Electronic Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

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## **Abstract**

Nowadays, the term 'tracking' has only a faint presence in the youth justice field but throughout the 1980s, in England and Wales, it was the focus of a controversy out of all proportion to its incidence. Then, as now, it was used to denote a method of monitoring the whereabouts and time-use of young and young adult offenders. While many youth justice workers ardently defended it, many vigorously condemned it as too intrusive. In practice, its emphasis changed from something primarily surveillant to something primarily supportive, although its tough-sounding name was considered by its advocates to be discursively useful in a law and order culture. Rather paradoxically, the term faded from use in the aftermath of the Home Office's (1988) *Punishment in the Community* initiative. Although aspects of the controversy were noted in contemporaneous studies of youth justice (Ely, Swift and Sutherland, 1987; Curtis, 1989, Blagg and Smith, 1989) some of which heightened its surveillant elements in order to critique it (Davies, 1986; Pitts, 1990), it tends to be ignored in more recent accounts (Haines and Drakeford, 1996). Yet tracking left a legacy, contributing to the emergence in modern youth justice of two ostensibly divergent practices – mentoring and electronic monitoring. This paper aims mainly to document a neglected aspect of youth justice history but it also considers the way in which the tracking ideal lives on, and has been reconfigured in a more genuinely surveillant – electronic – form.

## **Introduction**

For better or worse, there is indeed much that is 'new' in New Labour's approach to youth justice (Cavadino, Crow and Dignan, 1999; Goldson, 2000; Faulkner, 2001) – mentoring and electronic tagging to name but two developments – but there is at the same time a wilful 'amnesia' affecting a new generation of youth justice managers, a marked lack of curiosity among contemporary practitioners, and even some academics, as to how 'new' practices originated (Pitts, 2002). As one of the latter, Monica Barry (2000), for example, attempted to reframe and update the traditional distinction between 'care' and 'control' in work with offenders in terms of a new generic distinction between 'mentoring' and 'monitoring'. While these terms now denote different, and perhaps even oppositional rather than complementary approaches and mentalities, it will be the core argument of this paper that both have a common ancestor in the youth justice field, in the all-but-forgotten practice of 'tracking'.

In the 1980s, in England and Wales, 'tracking' was understood to be an intensive, *individualised* method of working with young offenders (and, later, young adult offenders) who might otherwise have been sentenced to residential care or custody.

Understanding its emergence, in the late 1970s, requires attention to both policy and practice developments in 'juvenile justice' and the Probation and Aftercare Service, which, then as now, were separate but overlapping fields of activity. The former was a newly developing specialism in local authority Social Services Departments (SSDs), formally accountable to the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS), the latter a separate organisation formally, but loosely accountable to the Home Office. Each were served by different professional associations, and although juvenile justice workers and probation officers were mostly all trained on the same social work courses, the culture of their respective organisations exhibited significant differences, which tracking was to accentuate.

Tracking emerged specifically from the first wave of criticism to which 'intermediate treatment' (henceforth 'IT') was subjected in the late seventies. IT was introduced by *Children in Trouble* (Home Office, 1968), and the Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA) 1969 to denote a range of welfare-oriented measures of varying duration and intensity, all of which emphasised integrating delinquent youngsters into the existing resources of local communities.<sup>2</sup> Some in the Home Office envisaged more, anticipating that IT would eventually supersede punitive responses to young offenders – attendance centres, detention centres and borstals. For various organisational, professional and political reasons, however, IT – a handful of experimental schemes apart – failed to develop as a robust nationwide provision and by the mid-1970s its promise was largely unfulfilled, much to the chagrin of the few social work professionals who had been inspired by it. By this time, the powerful magistrates lobby had reacted against the perceived liberalism and sentimentality of the CYPA 1969, expressing doubts about the original conception of IT. In addition, the viability of expensive residential care for young offenders was being undermined by reconviction research, prompting interest in local authority Social Services Departments (SSDs) in more cost-effective alternatives. In the late seventies these concerns galvanised the juvenile justice policy community (some practitioners and managers in SSDs, some academics at the University of Lancaster (Thorpe et al., 1980), the Personal Social Services Council (PSSC), the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) and some sympathetic DHSS civil servants) to develop a form of IT that would simultaneously meet the needs of serious young offenders, lessen magistrates' reliance on residential care and custody, and save SSDs money (Nellis, 1991a).

The Lancaster model of 'delinquency management' eventually became hugely influential, but to understand the roots of tracking, the PSSC's (1977: 52–53) report on *A Future for Intermediate Treatment* was particularly important. The PSSC expressed regret that 'one-to-one attachments' were largely absent from their survey of existing IT provision, arguing that some youngsters needed them, as a complement or an alternative to groupwork. They attributed its 'under-utilisation' to IT's initial over-enthusiasm for groupwork, and to the practical complexity of recruiting appropriate volunteers. Whilst not specifying how 'one-to-one attachments' fitted with their phased residential/day care model of intensive IT, the PSSC insisted that they 'should be considered an integral and essential part of *any range* of intermediate treatment provision' (my emphasis). This was not the most prominent of the report's recommendations, but among some in the policy community it created a new

receptiveness to individualised ways of working, of which both ‘tracking’ and ‘befriending’ were to be expressions.

A similar-but-different debate preoccupied the Probation and After Care Service in this period, triggered firstly by research which seemed to question the justifiability of the Services’ commitment to rehabilitation, and secondly by the independent Younger Report *Young Adult Offenders* (Advisory Council on the Penal System, 1974). This argued that more controlling measures were needed with young adult offenders because they had become more difficult to manage since the basic framework of probation had been established at the turn of the twentieth century. It proposed, among other things, a control and supervision order, which the National Association of Probation Officers (NAPO), as part of its broader resistance to Younger, caricatured as tantamount to making probation officers ‘screws on wheels’. NAPO used the Home Office’s own research on intensive individualised probation, the IMPACT study, which had found little support for it, to discredit the idea that probation could or should toughen up. Overall, Younger was rebuffed and never taken up by policymakers. Nonetheless, it had an impact, creating a small, vanguard-like group among Service managers (and some officers – Storey, 1977) who accepted that the traditional balance between care and control in the Service’s work needed to be struck differently. Purely for heuristic purposes in this paper I will call these people ‘the control movement’, to give them a coherence and specificity which they have lacked in recent, revisionist accounts of probation history. A prestigious Cropwood Round-Table Conference at the University of Cambridge (King, 1976) – the first overt sign of Younger’s subterranean influence – marked their emergence. The intense professional debate that followed this event – Bryant et al. (1978), James (1979), Bottoms and McWilliams (1979), Haxby (1978), Harris (1980), Ralphs (1981), Griffiths (1982a, 1982b), Davies (1982), and Jordan (1983) – was as important to probation, arguably more important, than the justice model critique of welfare-based approaches initiated by Bean (1976) – was influential in juvenile justice. For while the ‘control movement’ was significantly about generating a new control-oriented vocabulary (henceforth ‘control-talk’) it was never just about *debate*. It actually generated projects which ‘espoused methods based on an explicit recognition of a social control function.’ (Waterhouse, 1983: 64). These became the exemplars of ‘intensive probation’, but whereas a significant proportion of youth justice workers actively supported the development of ‘intensive IT’ (see Bottoms et al., 1990), a large number of probation officers, led by NAPO, and inspired by the putatively socialist vision of its leaders (Walker and Beaumont, 1981) opposed ‘intensive probation’ on largely civil libertarian grounds.

## **The Emergence of Tracking in Massachusetts**

The concept and practice of tracking originally developed in Massachusetts after the dramatic decarceration initiative – the closure of the training schools for young offenders – by the then Commissioner of Youth Services, Jerome Miller, following exposés of abuse and brutality. Miller and his successor, Joseph Leavey, encouraged voluntary and private sector agencies, old and new, to develop innovative programmes for managing decarcerated young offenders in the community. One of ultimately 200

bodies which came to serve the state in this regard, Key Inc. was established in 1970 (initially under the name Community Advocates Programme) by two altruistic graduate students who volunteered to provide informal, individualised support and counselling two or three times each week (ensuring school attendance, job finding, direction to recreational outlets). A public backlash against decarceration – fears it would increase recidivism – engulfed the state in 1973, forcing both government and voluntary sector to shift position (see Miller and Ohlin, 1985). ‘The survivability of [Miller’s] mandate to reform treatment of juvenile delinquents was at stake’, Bill Lyttle (1980: 3), Key’s subsequent director, later explained. In response Key upgraded their counselling programme into ‘tracking’, which recognising both the delinquent’s need for help *and* the community’s for protection because ‘the two needs are inter-related, and that only by addressing both needs together, could each separate need be fully met’ (ibid.: 1).

The essence of tracking was intense, individualised support and supervision, but over the next six years, several variants, of differing intensities, evolved to service a wide spectrum of problematic young people. *Outreach and Tracking* was the basic model. *Tracking Plus*, the most intense, was focused on serious and persistent young offenders who had initially been in secure accommodation, and facilitated a graduated transfer, through residential care, then to supervision in the community, either with their own families or special foster families. All variants of tracking assumed that lack of structure in a youngster’s life contributed to their delinquency, and all shared certain basic precepts. Firstly, ‘know where the youth is at all times’. Secondly, ‘ensure the youth has a highly structured daily schedule’. Thirdly, ‘ensure that the youth develops a life structure and skill (through school or work) that can be maintained even after the Key tracker withdraws’. Fourthly, ‘provide intense support to the youth through family work, counselling, recreational programming and advocacy’. Fifthly, ‘monitor behaviour intensively through frequent, often unannounced visits to home, school, work, friends . . .’ (ibid.: 3). Tracking could last between six and twelve months, and was deemed successful if by the end of the experience a youngster had ‘internalised the structure placed on him by Key’ (ibid.: 6) and committed no new crimes.

In his memoir of the closing of the training schools Miller (1991) never specifically mentions ‘tracking’, and Key did not use the term ‘surveillance’ to describe it – although Rutherford (1978: 115) did – but even though it could indeed be highly intrusive compared to traditional forms of social work/probation supervision, a caring element remained. ‘Counsellors’ (as trackers were officially called) were expected to build ‘a warm supportive, mutually accountable relationship’ with youngsters, which was to be ‘the fulcrum of change’, and to restructure time and behaviour patterns, develop positive attitudes and improve family interaction and support. When it is necessary or appropriate to know a youth’s activities and whereabouts at all times, a Tracking system of telephone call-ins, personal spot checking and close daily monitoring is added to the programme. (The Key Programme Inc. – Annual Report, 1978: 6.)

Thus, contracts between youngster, parent, agency worker and state social worker specified school attendance, part-time work for up to two hours per day after school, informal counselling and group recreation in evenings and at weekends. A curfew hour, specifying the time for return to home or lodgings (typically 9.30 pm) was agreed by

all parties, and randomly checked. Youngsters not involved in structured activities were expected to phone their 'counsellor' to say where they were. Counsellors used phones to check whether youngsters were at designated places and followed-up a percentage of such calls with visits. Violations of agreed routines and behaviour resulted in increased curfew hours, being grounded all day at Key's offices or permanent daytime attachment to a counsellor as they did their rounds, through to – for those on *Tracking Plus* – return to the residential unit for cooling off. Fulton (1978: 54), a visiting English probation officer, particularly noted the 'mentor' scheme in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which provided twenty-four-hour care and supervision on a one-to-one basis, and involved the young offender writing an *hourly* log of his or her activities.

Counsellors tended to be people in their twenties, often graduates seeking life experience, with flexible social lives and an abundance of time, energy and commitment. Each tracked three or four youngsters. They were salaried, trained by Key and worked for a maximum of two years (acquiring skills that facilitated other careers), risking burn-out if they stayed longer. Partly because of its workforce flexibility Key 'grew to be a national model, providing quality community supervision to hundreds' (Miller, 1991: 168). By 1980 it was the largest of the young offender support agencies in Massachusetts, providing a portfolio of secure, residential and community-based services for children and young people up to the age of 20 years.

## Importing Tracking to England

There is a long history in England and Wales of borrowing and adapting penal measures from America, for both young and adult offenders – indeed, one of 'intermediate treatments' several roots had itself been American. In the late seventies, serious attempts to ensure IT's potential as an alternative to residential care, detention centre and borstal were pursued for the first time, and Jerome Miller's initiative in Massachusetts was drawn on to sustain it. It was initially upheld by Andrew Rutherford, a former borstal governor turned academic, who had spent time in America (Rutherford 1974, 1975, 1977, 1978). Although Rutherford recognised that replicating Miller's particular strategy would be difficult in Britain, he nonetheless believed Massachusetts was proof that a more or less custody-free juvenile justice system was both desirable and feasible. Rather like NACRO (1977), on whom he was a significant influence, and the PSSC (1977), Rutherford was more concerned with Miller's political and organisational strategies for accomplishing the dissolution of the training schools than with the detail of the community-based measures that replaced them, and only once mentioned 'tracking' (Rutherford, 1978: 115).

People closer to social work practice were more attentive to the replacement measures. Rev. Nick Stacey (1971), a senior Anglican minister and, at this point in time Director of Kent Social Services, was a prominent champion of intermediate treatment. With Kent Probation he had co-pioneered an intensive day care/groupwork project for young offenders, the Close Support Unit, the first in Britain to incorporate curfews (Ralphs, 1981).<sup>3</sup> Stacey who visited Key Inc. in autumn 1979, was duly impressed, and invited its director and assistant director to address a large national meeting of his fellow Social Services' Directors, plus local and central government officials, in

London, in February 1980. It focused primarily on using voluntary and non-profit making bodies to flexibilise and alleviate the high costs of social services, and only secondarily on tracking – but Stacey was interested in making connections between them.

The London meeting undoubtedly stimulated interest. In an overview of youth justice developments in 1980/81, Lloyd (1981) noted that Gloucester, Birmingham, Bolton and Devon Social Services were all considering tracking. Devon eventually opted for a different form of intensive IT, but others seemed keen to emulate Key Inc.'s tone. Location-monitoring, for example, was central to Bolton's proposed scheme:

*The scheme would involve a network of professionals and volunteers in keeping 24-hour surveillance on offenders. . . . The scheme would deter them from committing offences and would enable them to establish a more acceptable lifestyle.*

(cited in Lloyd, 1981: 7)

Stacey was not initially successful in persuading his own IT staff in Kent to adopt tracking. They argued that it was a more intensive measure than local young offenders needed, and that it would be preferable to mesh existing IT schemes into the county's broader childcare provision than to introduce something wholly new, not least because magistrates might take some persuading of its merit. Only after the opposition of the early generation of IT officers had waned, and the Close Support Unit (which a number of IT officers themselves thought too intrusive) had closed down, was a tracking scheme for youngsters leaving residential care, using Community Service Volunteers, developed in Kent (Robinson, 1986: 14; Chris Stanley, former Kent IT manager, personal communication, 26 September 2003).

The first tracking project directly inspired by Massachusetts to be established in England was a partnership between a faith-based voluntary organisation and a statutory agency. Ron Newby, regional director (Midlands) for the Church of England Children's Society, and Martin Brassington, Assistant Director of Coventry Social Services Department, visited Key Inc. in summer 1980. Drawing on *Tracking Plus*, they created the Project for Alternative Community Experience (PACE) in Coventry in 1982. They did not, however, replicate the Massachusetts original, which they acknowledged was 'quite punitive', involving body searches and the occasional use of handcuffs (Newby and Brassington, 1981: 2), concentrating instead on providing a year long programme of 'close support, supervision and monitoring' for 12–16 year olds. This began in residential care (for assessment purposes) and progressively lessened in intensity as the youngster became re-established in the community. The prospect of recall into residential care existed for those failing to comply with 'intensive supervision' (ibid.: 3). Despite the ostensibly tough language in which the project was described (at least to some audiences) conventional social work aims, expressed in the then fashionable language of 'contracts' (Corden, 1980), was well to the fore:

*. . . the project will work to a plan tailored to each individual's particular need and circumstance which will encourage the young person's emotional growth and self-awareness, and help him to acquire social skills and attitudes which are necessary to live and succeed in society. The basis of the individual plan will be to help the young person to recognise and accept responsibility for*

*himself and his own actions and to teach him to acknowledge and deal with the reality of his everyday situation.*

(Church of England Children's Society, 1981b: 1)

PACE was staffed by a mix of professionals, a residential worker, a community worker, a family therapist, social workers and four Community Service Volunteers. For no other reason than to give itself a distinct identity (and perhaps to offset criticism that it contradicted the spirit of IT) it sought to distance itself from the IT provision available elsewhere in Coventry. "Tracking is a different model to IT" Ron Newby is reported to have said, 'It should not be confused with IT' (cited in Lloyd, 1981: 6). However, while some IT officers in this period would indeed have resisted subjecting young offenders to surveillance, few would have objected to PACE's stated theoretical base:

*PACE is not based on any one theoretical concept; rather it draws from a number including behaviour modification, reality therapy and family therapy. The prevailing mood of the programme is one that conveys to the child and family safety and caring.*

(Church of England Children's Society, 1981b: 2)

The practices that this translated into were as follows (at least as stated):

*Once a young person is accepted into the scheme, he has to keep in close contact with his project worker at agreed times and venues. An individual programme is designed according to each youngster's needs and circumstances. The worker 'keeps track' of the youngster throughout the day and night, weekday and weekend. This ensures intensive supervision not merely support.*

*During the day checks will be made at school and with employers. The young person will be expected to telephone in or come to the centre to give an account of his movements. In the evenings and at weekends the youngster must be at home or attend the centre, youth club or other local activity as agreed with his project worker. One of the purposes of the scheme is to keep a young person purposefully occupied and so out of trouble. PACE is not soft option. Freedom is heavily curtailed.*

(Church of England Children's Society, 1981a: 2)

## **Tracking after PACE**

The Criminal Justice Act 1982 changed the landscape of juvenile justice, but not in immediately anticipated ways. The Thatcher government had intended it as a repudiation of the 1969 CYPA's welfare ideals, and many liberal and left oriented commentators were disheartened by it. It reinvented the detention centre in its original quasi-military guise, and for the first time empowered magistrates' courts to sentence direct to borstal (now renamed youth custody) – this power having hitherto been restricted to higher courts. Some legal restrictions on using custody had been won by the Opposition in the course of parliamentary debate on the Bill, and the government had rather cautiously indicated a commitment to developing alternatives to custody. Nonetheless, many probation officers and youth justice workers were hostile to the intrusive form these community alternatives might take, especially those with negative conditions, such as night restriction requirements (curfews) in supervision orders



(Burney, 1985). Others, however, saw a challenge and an opportunity arising, and set about creating the credible, community-based alternatives envisaged by NACRO, the PSSC and Lancaster University in the late 1970s (Reynolds and Williamson, 1985), of which PACE had become one possible model.

Understanding the growth of one-to-one work with young offenders which developed in the early eighties is complicated by the diverse forms it took, the inconsistent vocabularies used to describe it, and the paucity of independent research. One is reliant on in-house evaluations and publicity from the provider agencies, most of which contained strategic 'public relations' elements. There is, furthermore, often no way of knowing whether the reality of any given scheme matched the rhetoric of the publicity – or of its critics. Brockington and Shaw (1986: 37), for example, claim 'tracking schemes here [in England] have on the whole retained the essential elements' but offer no empirical support. Davies (1986: 84) refers disparagingly to unnamed schemes which offered 'close (even hour-by-hour) monitoring and surveillance' but it is simply not clear that *mere monitoring*, devoid of support, was ever actually practiced, whatever programme publicity claimed, and however much it might have been desired by some of tracking's supporters. Some schemes may well have approximated to this, but Smith's (1999: 151) quip that tracking was the 'low tech forerunner of electronic monitoring', whilst true, tells only half the story.

Mapping tracking's evolution is certainly complicated by the parallel development of 'befriending'.<sup>4</sup> This was ostensibly a low-intensity form of one-to-one attachment, with an explicit emphasis on welfare rather than control. Although volunteers had long been used for this purpose by probation officers, a particular model of befriending was championed by a multi-agency project (Social Services, Probation and Aftercare Service, Community Education and Save the Children Fund (SCF) in Cambridgeshire (Green, 1979). Locally recruited, trained volunteers met weekly, over six months, with young people whose groupwork programme had ended. Volunteer/youngster activities included cooking, sports, model-making, visiting places and looking after animals. SCF subsequently established three further befriending schemes, in Belfast, London and Glasgow (Hills, 1986), while other agencies developed them independently. A mid-decade survey of befriending and tracking schemes by the National Children's Bureau (Robinson, 1986) listed twelve of the former, variously used as elements of bail support, supervision orders and/or aftercare. It expressed conventional wisdom in claiming that 'befriending' and 'tracking' indicate the two extremes of one-to-one provision', but the reality was more complex. Some intensive alternative to care and custody projects described one-to-one provision as 'befriending' rather than 'tracking', and in some projects the provision may well have been low intensity. The Association of Juvenile Justice (AJJ) (1986) nonetheless warned against 'schemes [which] sometimes operate tracking methods but under the euphemism of 'befriending'', but omitted to say that the reverse was also possible – projects offering tough sounding 'tracking' which were actually closer to 'befriending'.

There were also hybrid schemes. The Nottingham Social Services South Division *Linking Scheme* began in March 1982, characterising itself 'as a medium intensity activity on a continuum of individual-based Intermediate Treatment activities' (Lee, 1983: 2). This scheme had local antecedents – 'two similar but less organised schemes' which

had run between 1973–6, using volunteers to support ‘at risk’ children from single parent families. Nottingham staff had visited PACE and discovered a clear affinity with tracking, but ‘linking’ was retained to avoid overt connotations of control. Nottingham’s internal evaluation makes no mention of regulation of youngster’s daily or weekly schedules as ends in themselves. The ‘linkers’ (trained volunteers, sessionally paid) sought to build relationships and influence behaviour, finding themselves ‘devoting more time to [this] than they had initially anticipated’ (Lee, 1983: 12), and in one instance moving in with a family, every weekend for a month, to forestall a youngster’s involvement in weekend delinquency (Thorpe, 1983: 2). By 1983 – by which time 27 youngsters had been paired with 16 linkers – the Social Services Department accepted linking’s effectiveness and gave it mainstream status. It emphasised that linking had ‘been particularly useful in rural areas when other forms of work are limited by physical isolation and the lack of other resources’ (Nottingham Social Services, 1983). Hertfordshire Social Services Department established a similar linking scheme in 1984 (Robinson, 1986).

Tracking was nonetheless the commonest name used for such intensive one-to-one schemes as developed in the mid-1980s. Unlike PACE, they were understood as elements of local IT provision. Combined data from Robinson’s (1986) and Brockington and Shaw’s (1986) surveys suggests that there were only twelve schemes, and although others may never have been officially documented, the practice generated controversy out of all proportion to its incidence. Approximately half the tracking (and some befriending) schemes were funded under the £15 million DHSS LAC 83(3) Initiative which provided three years seed-money to partnerships between local authorities and voluntary organisations (including faith-based charities) which offered innovative intensive projects. This formalised an *ad hoc* approach to the central funding of demonstration projects in IT in which the DHSS had been engaged for several years, of which PACE and the Leeds Alternative to Custody and Care tracking scheme – modelled on PACE, also established in 1982 – were both examples. Nick Stacey’s highlighting of contracting-out in Massachusetts four years earlier was one of the factors which prompted the Initiative. Although conceived on a smaller scale, it was nonetheless an important catalyst in the development of intensive IT, and ultimately in reductions in the use of custody.

One particular LAC 83(3) project became the best publicised of all the tracking schemes, and while not necessarily typical of the others provides a useful insight into what tracking entailed. The West Sussex Tracking Scheme was ‘very loosely based’ on the Leeds tracking scheme, and run by Chichester Diocesan Association for Family Social Work and West Sussex Social Services Department. It served a large rural area ill served by public transport, and was established partly to maximise contact with a dispersed population of 14–17 year old young offenders, rather than requiring them to attend ‘one central location’ and partly because of groupwork’s perceived limitations (Platten and Gibson, 1987). Tracking was initially offered as a ‘specified activity requirement’, for the first ninety days of a Supervision Order, during which time trackers and youngsters were in thrice daily contact, face-to-face or by phone. This was augmented by involvement in community service, sponsored events for charities, and residential experiences to acquaint youngsters with potential new interests. A bail

support scheme was subsequently added. The six full-time staff appointed as trackers (each seeing one or two youngsters, working 362 days per year, were either experienced youth workers or experienced residential social workers, who were cheaper to employ than experienced field social workers (Curtis, 1989: 124). They 'sometimes had to travel long distances, by car or moped, as well as working long hours' (ibid.: 127). Despite apparent success in reducing offending, the project was discontinued when the LAC(83)3 funding expired, and was replaced by an intensive groupwork-based IT programme in which individualised support became an *occasional* supplement to groupwork, provided by sessional volunteers. Curtis (1989: 136) concedes that 'the small number of young people [19 in an eighteen month period] needing alternatives to custody or care in the Western area made the cost *per capita* of such intensive one-to-one supervision comparatively high'.

Similar themes – and some differences – emerge in the rather more incomplete literature relating to other tracking schemes, whether they were LAC 83(3) funded or not. The North Yorkshire Alternative to Custody Tracking project, run without a voluntary sector partner, was also developed to serve a predominantly rural area. The Kirklees Enterprise for Youth purposefully blended intensive daily contact and groupwork (Curtis, 1989: 97–102). In both projects the locally recruited trackers were part-time employees, paid as welfare assistants (Robinson, 1986: 17). The Bedfordshire Social Services Department scheme intensively supported 12–16 year olds for one year or less, and allowed the tracker to specify negative conditions, for example, places and peers to be avoided. Hackney Social Services Department characterised its Intensive Evening/Weekend Tracking Scheme as a measure which provided 'a powerful alternative adult model [as a means of] producing positive changes in behaviour and attitude' but almost apologised for its apparent incongruity with the ethos of 'a radical socialist borough', an indirect reminder of the sensitivities which surrounded tracking throughout its brief history.

The most controversial tracking project turned out to be the first one established for young adult offenders in Leeds, by the West Yorkshire Probation Service, in 1985, which was not 'afraid to emphasise the . . . control component' (Brockington and Shaw, 1986: 38). Probation had been a partner with the Social Services Department in the juvenile tracking scheme set up three years before, which involved contacts several times daily for a period of 28 days assessment, followed *either* by groupwork, *or* a further four months of tracking. A similar model was used in the young adult version, deploying eight trackers (paid as probation service assistants (PSAs) supervised by a probation officer. The Audit Commission, interested in 'value for money', described it thus:

*After thorough assessment, a working plan is drawn up and a 'contract' agreed with each offender. The tracker implements this plan through personal contact up to six days a week for 60 days spread over a three month period, complemented by telephone contact and spot checks. The first 28 days are a trial period with the offender bailed pending sentence. Each offender is expected to plan ahead to anticipate and avoid situations likely to cause problems (for example excessive drinking or peer group pressure). At the same time, the tracker helps the offender put something positive in the place of crime. Breach procedures are clearly defined and consistently*

*enforced, although a close working relationship is also formed, giving a positive experience of authority vital if the offender is to change and accept new responsibilities. The cost at around £100 per week compares favourably with custody, and the results in terms of reduced offending are encouraging.*

(Audit Commission, 1989: 48)

While probation officers associated with the scheme defended it as ‘a positive way of staying out of the criminal merry-go-round’, pointing out that ‘guaranteed daily contacts with someone who wants to help them [means that] clients have come to ask whether they can join.’ (Hutchinson, 1987: 17), it was the object of NAPOs hostility from its inception. The Home Office (1988: para 3.17) took a different view, and despite admitting that ‘there has been no central evaluation of the success of [tracking] schemes in diverting offenders from custody or in preventing offending during or after the period of supervision’,<sup>5</sup> was, by the end of the decade, extolling the Leeds scheme as a model of good practice.

## **The Tracking Controversy**

Criticism of tracking came largely from two pressure groups, the Association of Juvenile Justice (AJJ), and the National Association of Probation Officers (NAPO), and from some academics. Although the AJJ had been set up to promote IT specifically as an alternative to care and custody, and was favourably disposed to many intensive interventions and prepared to use ‘control-talk’ to win credibility with sentencers, it initially repudiated tracking. It did distinguish between *Outreach and Tracking* and *Tracking Plus*, portraying the latter as punitive and intrusive – ‘a version of custody within the community . . . a violation of civil liberties’ – and utterly unacceptable, for instance, in the Coventry PACE scheme (Association of Juvenile Justice, 1986). It offered only qualified support for *Outreach and Tracking* (which it understood to be the model used by North Yorkshire Social Services, and in Kirklees Enterprise for Youth). Its position was in fact ambiguous, for while it insisted that ‘tracking should not be viewed as a “treatment programme”’ it argued that any intensive one-to-one work should involve ‘constructive supervision, counselling and sharing of practical skills’, and be used as an alternative to long rather than short custodial sentences, even if it eschewed ‘coercion, threat of breach, [and] imposition of curfews’.

NAPO was more uncompromising. It had been opposed from the outset to the control movement (and to ‘control-talk’) and challenged this ‘coercive tilt’ in probation practice (Walker and Beaumont, 1981) – coming perilously close to implying that coercion was *never* legitimate in work with offenders – at every opportunity. It mounted a sustained defence of conventional probation orders, in whose versatility to meet very variable levels of offender need (risk was rarely mentioned in the 1980s) it had huge faith. Its central office, annual conference and relevant local branches warned continually of the thin-end-of-the-wedge dangers of Kent’s Probation Control Unit, the Leeds tracking scheme and the negative requirements sanctioned by the Criminal Justice Act 1982. It criticised the employment practices entailed by tracking (using inadequately trained cheap labour) and discouraged union members from cooperating with such schemes. NAPO’s critique of tracking was undoubtedly influential within the

Service, although not all probation officers accepted it, or shared NAPOs scepticism about using trained volunteers in certain roles (see Holmes and Maizels, 1978; Leat and Rankin, 1981), particularly as convincing evidence gradually emerged that tracking *as implemented* was not primarily about location-monitoring. The comments of a group of parents and youngsters involved in PACE, expressed at a Church of England Children's Society conference, undoubtedly challenged NAPO's position:

*While it provided no magical answers, some points emerged clearly from the comments of concerned parents and their tracked youngsters. First, the young people had been returned home, a contract had been made, and the whole family had become involved. Second, through a structured programme, they had been directed toward facing the reasons for delinquency and the life skills they often lacked. But, above all, parents felt that they had regained control and were surprised by a system that, unusually, returned to them both responsibility and influence.*

(Editorial, *Community Care*, 23 May 1985)

John Errington, former probation officer, director of Hilltop, (the SCF youth justice consultancy which assisted two of the Yorkshire tracking schemes), and arguably the country's most informed voice on tracking, brought the conflict with NAPO into the open. He conceded that tracking was 'intrusive' but wanted it judged less by *frequency* and more by the *purpose and consequences* of contact, warning that NAPO's opposition to it 'directly contributes to our present accelerating use of custody'. He summed up:

*Tracking, as employed in intermediate treatment, is not that practiced in the USA and it is being used to provide adequate levels of support to maintain serious or persistent young offenders in their families and communities. Trackers assist them to gain understanding of their offending and encourage them to develop a life style that does not leave them at risk of recidivism.*

(Errington, 1985: 3 emphasis added)

This did not settle the issue. In 1987, Platten and Gibson (23) were still defending their West Sussex scheme against 'popular misconceptions and criticisms', noting that 'the heavy reliance on personal relationships is very far removed from the criticism levelled at tracking and is in fact much more to do with good social work than surveillance and control'. Ixer's (1987) interviews with youngsters supervised at the Leeds Alternative to Custody and Care project seemingly concur. Although he pointedly insisted that 'tracking is about social control and 'behaviour modification' through 24 hour a day supervision', comments from the tracked youngsters suggest that they had experienced something more than gratuitous location-monitoring, and appreciated the help given:

*I've been in detention centre. I hate it, especially the way you are bossed about. I like tracking, they respect you, you have your freedom, they deal with the problem and they don't push you around.*

*It's easier being put inside – tracking is much harder to do . . . You have to look at painful things and difficult issues about why you offended.*

*My tracker's all right, it's like having a friend. I am glad I came here 'cause I've learned how to stay out of trouble. I've enjoyed it.*

(All cited in Ixer, 1987: 15–16)

NAPO's opposition to tracking had been formalised in a February 1986 policy document. It characterised tracking as 'policing', and had expressed particular concern about the development of bail support programmes for young offenders, and the use of tracking within them. NAPO, unlike the AJJ, was opposed in principle to bail support on the grounds that it was inappropriate to intervene in the lives of as yet unconvicted defendants (see Curtis, 1989: 98). It was not able to halt these new projects, but in Kent, it played a part in bringing about the closure of the Close Support Unit and the Probation Control Unit (Spencer and Edwards, 1986; Ely, Swift and Sutherland, 1987), or rather, their replacement by more acceptably intensive regimes (in which curfews were optional). In 1988, NAPO continued to portray the Leeds' tracking scheme as a 'repressive form of contact with clients', criticising the high breakdown rate after 60 days, and claiming that the local use of custody had not fallen. It did not dispute that some of the scheme's clients had needed (and benefited from) intensive work, but insisted it should not have been undertaken in a framework which emphasised 'control and surveillance':

*On the contrary this good work could have been equally successfully carried out under the terms of a simple probation order. As probation officers, we are involved with clients to 'advise, assist and befriend' in an attempt to bring some improvement and stability into their lifestyle in the hope that they will move away from previous offending behaviour. Tracking brings us into conflict with this role, placing us in the position of quasi-prison officers in the community.*

(Falkingham and McCarthy, 1988: 6)

The Leeds scheme did close in 1989, and was replaced with a centre-based intensive supervision scheme (see Brownlee and Joanes, 1993, for some observations on the transition). NAPO claimed that West Yorkshire management had accepted that 'tracking had completely failed to keep down custodial rates and were thus amenable to these new proposals'. Consistent with its refusal to use 'control-talk', it also sought to expunge all semantic trace of the earlier regime:

*Trackers will be redesignated 'Intensive Support Workers' and will work alongside supervising officers, not under a 'Tracking Scheme Liaison Officer' as at present. The aim is also to get 'trackers' paid on PSA [Probation Service Assistants] scales – their present pay and conditions are atrocious . . . these proposals would bring Leeds nearer to restoring a social work basis to supervision which is the kernel of NAPO's policy.*

(Report of the NAPO National Executive Committee Meeting of 7 April 1989)

But NAPO's success in Leeds was arguably a pyrrhic victory. Just as it vanquished what in its terms was a misguided and ideologically dangerous project, the government took up tracking – and curfews – in the context of its new *Punishment in the Community* initiative (Allan, 1990). The Green Paper *Punishment, Custody and the Community* (Home Office, 1988), sought to reduce the prison population by means of intensive and demanding community penalties, and to transfer successes in the youth justice field to the young adult offender field. Its accompanying document, *Targetting Offending: An Action Plan* (Home Office, 1988b), instructed local probation services to develop projects for this age group, and tracking was specifically commended. In their insistence on 'restrictiveness' in community penalties (including, in principle, residence at, or

prohibition from, particular places) both papers represented the apotheosis of the post-Younger 'control movement'.

### **The Twin Legacies of Tracking: Electronic Monitoring and Mentoring**

There was only ever 'scant knowledge' (Brockington and Shaw 1986: 39) of exactly what tracking in practice entailed. The burden of the available English evidence suggests that it was rarely undertaken *merely* to know where young offenders were at particular times of day, although perhaps sometimes it was. The abstract principle of tracking, however, gave credence and legitimacy to *the idea* that monitoring an offender's location should be a desirable feature of 'credible' community supervision. While the Green Paper was in part based on dialogue with penal reform organisations about defensible ways of reducing prison numbers, it went much further than they wished to go on location monitoring, by linking curfews and tracking, for the first time in a government document, to a new modality of accomplishing this, *electronic* monitoring (EM).

*Electronic monitoring might help to enforce an order which required offenders to stay at home. It is used for this purpose in North America . . . **Less restrictively**, it could help in tracking an offender's whereabouts.*

(Home Office, 1988: 3.19–3.20, emphasis added)

To the Home Office, electronically monitored variants of curfews and tracking promised what these measures could not fully deliver on their own. The Home Office took its cues on this matter from the Offender's Tag Association (OTA), established to promote EM in Britain in 1981 by Tom Stacey, a journalist and prison visitor (younger brother of Nick Stacey, the importer of tracking to Britain, who was also on the Association's board). OTA publicity routinely distinguished between *tracking tagging* (following offender's movements) and *curfew tagging* (confining offenders to their homes) and openly promoted the tracking variety as the more viable alternative to prison (Stacey, 1989; Nellis, 1991b). Although aware that in the early eighties the Home Office was rather sceptical about EM, NAPO duly warned its members:

*The Offender Tag Association are floating the latest American surveillance technique, computer tracking of individual movement by means of an electronic anklelet riveted on to offenders, with the probation service as potential enforcers. At last the effective curfew monitor . . . [This surely runs] counter to . . . the social work imagination.*

(‘Comment’, *Probation Journal*, June 1983)

In fact, the nascent EM schemes in the USA were all of the home confinement, rather than the tracking, variety (Ball, Huff and Lilly, 1988) given that a suitable technology for the latter had not yet been developed. NAPO may have made an honest mistake here, but its purposes vis-à-vis tracking were served rather than damaged by dystopian extrapolations. Later in the decade, the spectre of tracking tagging loomed even more ominously when it was realised that a Spiderman comic – in which the superhero's movements were electronically monitored – had played its part in the genesis of EM in the USA (Fox, 1987). The fact that the Green Paper elided tracking and tagging seemingly supported NAPO's view that tracking itself was 'merely the

wedge in the door', the precursor of an 'even more severe item of social control' (Falkingham and McCarthy, 1988: 6; see also NAPO, 1988). Nonetheless, it became apparent to the Home Office soon after the Green Paper appeared that tracking tagging was not yet feasible, and the first official experiment with EM, in 1989/90, offered curfews to offenders who might otherwise have been remanded in custody (Mair and Nee, 1990). By the time of the White Paper *Crime, Justice and Protecting the Public* (Home Office, 1990), the Home Office had committed itself to an electronically monitored curfew order as a community sentence for older juveniles (16+) and young adults, but while the Leeds tracking scheme was still commended (*ibid.*, para 4.14), all official reference to *electronic* tracking had been dropped.

NAPO continued to resist the development of intensive one-to-one work undertaken by non-professional staff but in the youth justice field a different response emerged. The AJJ (1989) had by now reconciled itself to supportive versions of tracking, finding it compatible with their overriding principle of 'minimum intrusion', and accepting that it had 'considerable potential' for youngsters whose daily lives were otherwise unstructured. The AJJ nonetheless firmly dissociated tracking from tagging, indicating that it was 'without reservation against the introduction of any form of electronic monitoring of offenders' (paras 3.1.7–3.1.8). The Intermediate Treatment Fund (1990: paras 11 and 29), in its response to the 1990 White Paper acted as if the debate on tracking were *passé*, and focused instead on opposing curfews (which they believed would exacerbate tension in the home) and electronic monitoring, considering the latter 'particularly unsuitable for juveniles'. It argued that where it was felt necessary to monitor 'the activities *and location* of an offender' (emphasis added) it was important to 'complement monitoring with a range of diversionary and preventive activities'. This clearly permitted the continuation of supportive forms of tracking.

Nonetheless, the term 'tracking' became problematic even to many youth justice practitioners, not least because in its enthusiasm for the Leeds young adult scheme, the Home Office was clearly affirming its original, predominantly surveillant meaning. This was not what youth justice practitioners understood, or wished it to mean (especially if it was linked to electronic monitoring), and to avoid the appearance of alignment with Home Office intentions, many were happy to let it lapse. During the 1980s it had served a useful purpose, helping youth justice workers to establish more intensive programmes for young offenders, and enabling them to speak a credible and convincing language of 'control' as well as 'care'. There was no consistent nomenclature at the start of the 1990s and, in any case, 'tracking' migrated tentatively into other fields of criminal justice, notably the management of sex offenders (Hebenton and Thomas, 1996), mutating, eventually, into a generic term for gathering information about an individual, based on the trails and traces left on electronic databases. Thus, in 1990s youth justice 'tracking', 'befriending' and 'linking' all lingered on. But gradually, a new word filtered in from an established position elsewhere in the public sector, and indeed in the commercial world – 'mentoring'. With its connotations of support and enablement, it sounded more purposeful than 'befriending', but not as predatory as 'tracking'. It gained prominence via Hackney's Dalston Youth Project, established in 1994 (Crime Concern and Youth Justice Board, 2000), and was commended by the Audit Commission's (1996) seminal report, *Misspent Youth*. Partly because the



managerial discourses which increasingly suffused criminal justice policy found it congenial, its ascendancy in youth justice was assured. Substantively, much of what was once designated 'supportive tracking' (as opposed to 'location-monitoring tracking') or 'befriending' became 'mentoring', but paradoxically, because the concept of mentoring has a traceable history of its own, and because institutional memories can be short (Smith, 1999), it has now become possible to interpret the evolution of intensive one-to-one work with young offenders without referring to the 1980s debates on tracking. Even Curtis (1999: 180–5), who was familiar with tracking, does not do so.

## Conclusion

This paper has aimed to close a gap in the historical record of youth justice in England and Wales, exploring in depth and detail a story which has been glossed over and oversimplified. With hindsight it can be seen to supply a further instance of transatlantic 'policy transfer' in criminal justice (Newburn, 2002), a process which was little studied at the time, but which remains both substantively and rhetorically important. The tracking story also shows, in rather elemental form, how specific and particular practices can become the focus of political and professional debates on which the direction of future policy hinges. While it is not my claim that tracking is the *sole* ancestor of mentoring and electronic monitoring – other factors shaped these practices as well, not least other 'practice transfers' from the USA – it is my contention that the movement which led to them was rooted in tracking, and that in the case of EM in particular, attitudes towards it, both for and against, were initially shaped by its discursive association with tracking. Mentoring to some extent represents the 'taming' of tracking – intensive one-to-one support work with young offenders has now been rendered acceptable to all relevant constituencies. EM, on the other hand, will evolve and retains the capacity to subvert established understandings of community supervision. I will end with a brief consideration of each.

Mentoring has become 'a key element of effective practice' in contemporary Youth Offending Teams (YOTs). It is defined as 'a voluntary one-to-one relationship between a young person and a supportive adult, established to help the young person achieve his or her goals. It is more than befriending and aims for constructive changes in the life and behaviour of the young person' (Keane, 2003: 5). An affinity with the supportive versions of tracking in the 1980s is suggested by its use in bail and post-release schemes. No mention is made of this ancestry in official publications, and history may be repeating itself. Pitts (2000: 56), for example, worries that in terms of official expectations 'mentoring has been hijacked by correctionalism', whilst recognising that practitioners are tending to dilute this into something more supportive, 'emancipatory' rather than 'correctional mentoring', or a blend of the two. This time, there is at least effectiveness research to draw on, particular emphasis being placed on the results of the American *Big Brothers, Big Sisters* scheme, which apparently improved school attendance, child-parent relationships and reduced substance abuse. The implication – as with tracking in 1980 – is still that the USA is pioneering methods of intervention from which England can learn. Whatever its origins,<sup>6</sup> mentoring – largely using non-professional sessional workers – is now widely used with a range of young

offenders and indeed young people more generally (Skinner and Fleming, 1999; Porteous, 2004), although much less so in probation.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, however, in the one-to-one element of the multi-modal Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) for the highest risk group, the term ‘tracking’ persists (Waters, Moore, Roberts, Merrington and Gray, 2003). It involves twice weekly contacts between tracker and offender but, as one of the researchers notes, different YOTs and ISSPs organise the task in different ways:

*The designated trackers tended to be ISSP officers or sessional staff whose other duties included case management and/or delivering specific programmes. Thus, in practice, supervision and surveillance tended to overlap.*

(Robin Moore, personal communication 26 January 2004)

Electronic tagging technologies are giving substance to the ‘ideal’ of location-monitoring in a way that tracking alone could never have done. EM has moved from experimental to mainstream status, and has been extended from adults to juveniles (Nellis, 2003). Apart from some small-scale use of voice verification technology (which enables supervised offenders to be contacted by phone, on a planned or random basis, at a variety of different locations), it has taken curfew tagging form. But, just as Tom Stacey (1993, 1995) anticipated, tracking tagging – using either mobile phone networks or GPS (global positioning system) satellites to monitor an offender’s movements or whereabouts in real time, twenty-four hours per day – is now commercially and technically feasible, and deemed politically desirable. Satellite tracking has been used experimentally in the USA – particularly in New Jersey, Texas, Michigan and Florida – since 1997, sometimes with juveniles (Petersilia, 2003). In England, drawing on the recommendations of the Correctional Services Review (Carter, 2004) the Home Office (2004) has announced that a satellite tracking scheme will be established later in the year. Far from being considered ‘less restrictive’ than curfew tagging, as it was in 1988, this is now being promoted as something *more restrictive*. From almost any standpoint, this is a dramatic, (potentially) paradigm-shifting development in 21st century criminal justice, tied in with both major modernising changes to the structure of what are now called ‘correctional services’, and with the broader emergence of information, communication and surveillance technologies (Castells, 1996; Lyon, 2001). Whether or not it is the harbinger of fundamentally new models of crime control, or merely something transient, remains to be seen, but the specific *roots* of these new tracking practices lie, not in the recent modernising impulses of New Labour, but in the first tentative steps to introduce individualised location-monitoring into community supervision a quarter of a century ago.

## **Endnotes**

1. I am grateful to a number of people for their help with this article, notably Alison Skinner who gave me a number of documents relating to tracking during a periodic bout of stock clearance at the National Youth Bureau. The reminiscences of former IT officers Denis Jones, Richard Hester and Chris Stanley were indispensable. David Megginson, Coral Gardiner, David Porteous and Robin Moore all shed light on mentoring. The two assessors who refereed this for *Youth Justice* suggested useful revisions.

2. Although the term 'intermediate treatment' first appeared in *Children In Trouble* (Home Office, 1968), the ideas and practices behind it had a long gestation. It originated in the suggestion by Basil Henriques, a prestigious and influential London magistrate, that something akin to the Boston [USA] Citizenship Training Scheme be experimented with in this country. The Home Office rejected the idea, but the Magistrate's Association remained keen on a new penalty 'intermediate' between probation and Approved School. Out of the Home Office's attempts to satisfy them, entwined with a number of other factors, such as the utilisation of local community resources, the concept of 'intermediate treatment' emerged (see Nellis, 1991a). (There is no doubt a story to be told as to why the state of Massachusetts should have a history of penal innovation – probation itself, the Boston Citizenship Training Scheme and Miller's dissolution of the training schools, but this is not the place.)
3. The Close Support Unit (CSU) for 14–16 year-olds was stimulated by Kent's Chief Probation Officer, Peter Ralphs (1981) and was consciously influenced by both the control movement in probation and the intensive IT movement. Ralphs and his colleagues drew on the lessons of implementing community service orders – Kent had been one of the six original pilot areas – to 'deal with even more difficult offenders [by providing] a firm but positive structure for a considerable part of their waking life' (p188). 'When a proposal was put to Mr Nicholas Stacey, director of social services in Kent', wrote Ralphs (*ibid.*), 'he readily agreed to provide the resources for such a unit out of intermediate treatment funds'. The Unit opened in February 1979. Thirty-eight out of 48 trainees completed its 90-day programme in the first two years. In January 1981, an equivalent unit for 17–24 year olds – the Probation Control Unit (PCU) – was set up. The emphasis in both Units was on 'strong care and strong control' (*ibid.*). Both offered a 90-day programme as part of a supervision or probation order. Each provided 12 hours of supervision between 9 am and 9 pm (later changed to 8 pm) on weekdays (if trainees were not in school or work) but not weekends, and introduced, *for the first time, in a community-based project*, a curfew at home from 10 pm to 6 am. It 'tracked' youngsters only in the sense of checking (by phone) whether they were in school.
4. 'Befriending' was expressly not a new idea at this point, even though interest in it was rekindled by the Cambridge SCF project. Derek Morrell, the civil servant who originated the concept of 'intermediate treatment', had been keen from the outset to see one-to-one befriending develop under its rubric, characterising befrienders drawn from the local community as 'resourceful friends'. Bob Holman (1995), a keen champion of welfare-based approaches to young offenders, kept this evocative phrase alive in his own promotion of befriending schemes. (See endnote 6.)
5. In a wide-ranging evaluation of intensive work with young offenders in 1987/88, which encompassed (anonymously) the Leeds Alternative to Custody and Care scheme, Bottoms and Haines (1993) found no unequivocal evidence that tracking was an effective means of reducing custody. This supported NAPO's view, but unlike NAPO Bottoms and Haines were not hostile to the principle of tracking *per se*. Their research was, however, written up several years after the fieldwork took place, and seen only by the Department of Health, its sponsors. It is unclear what, if any, influence it had on official policy towards tracking. Bottoms (1995) briefly summarises the overall evaluation.
6. The institutional and ideological origins of 'mentoring' – derived from Mentos, or Mentor, a mythological figure from Homer's *Odyssey* who helpfully rouses another character to action – are usefully summarised by Megginson and Garvey (2000). They note that in a widely read book, Abbe Fenelon (1651–1715) used Homeric imagery to portray himself as a 'mentor' to King Louis XIV's grandson, to whom he was appointed tutor. Tutoring can connote mere instruction, the passive acquisition of knowledge and skill, whereas mentoring connotes the bringing forth of talent *that is already there*, a nuance that royalty doubtless found flattering. In more modern times, psychologist Daniel J Levinson (1978) argued that mentor/protégé relationships were a key catalyst to achievement in highly successful men, and seemingly from him, a more demotic usage spread into a range of occupational contexts. By the early 1990s, the term 'mentoring' had become attached to various 'enablement' activities that had previously been known by other names. Megginson and Clutterbuck (1995) have been its champions in Britain. Mentoring's precise nature, duration and intensity, and its meaning to both mentor and mentoree is always setting-specific, but at its core – as its eponymous origins imply – it entails someone more experienced guiding, coaching and encouraging someone less experienced in the performance of a task (or role). It is (usually) more formal than befriending, but

less formal than supervision – and more purposeful than mere ‘volunteering’. Regarding young offenders, befriending schemes (variously called ‘buddy’ or ‘big brother/big sister’ schemes) may well have, historically, made their own contribution to the eventual emergence of mentoring. Partners Inc. in Denver, Colorado, and one of the first schemes to be documented, was started by eleven seminary students in 1968 to serve the local juvenile court, its ethos deriving from Christianity, the emancipatory spirit of ‘sixties social reforms and the nascent counselling movement (Moffitt, 1975). Students were matched with ‘at risk’ youngsters, keeping in touch by phone and mutual participation in recreational activities, this being the basis on which helpful relationships were then made. This model was not dissimilar from the Community Advocacy Programme established (independently?) by two altruistic graduate students in Jerome Miller’s Massachusetts, whose counselling and support work was later upgraded (or corrupted?) into ‘tracking’.

7. Mentoring has had a presence in probation, especially in connection with employment and training programmes for offenders (Gardiner, 1995), but never became as prevalent or prominent as it has become in youth justice. This may be because a great deal of ‘welfare work’ once undertaken in the Probation Service itself, is now contracted-out to ‘partner’ voluntary organisations. The West Midland Probation Area, however, currently uses 20 mentors to assist offenders with basic skills training, and in resettlement work, much as they used volunteers in the past.

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