

 THE CHICANO MOVEMENT

1965-1975

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In sum, the movement was extremely varied. Indeed, it would be more accurate to describe several Chicano movements. Although the students were more vocal and radical, consequently grabbing the headlines, most militant organizations were not student centered. In fact, as the historian Ignacio García argues, despite appearances, "a closer look at the Movement reveals that it remained dominated not by students or youth but by adults who had experienced Anglo-American prejudice for an extended period."⁸⁵ These activists were to be found in a variety of community groups, some operating in urban barrios, others in rural settings. Most served the needs of the working class.

Contrary to Muñoz's interpretation, however, middle-class organizations were also well represented in the movement. In the decade between 1965 and 1975, older middle-class associations like LULAC, CSO, MAPA, and even the G.I. Forum embraced the concept of La Raza—reluctantly at times, it is true. The spectrum within the movement extended from the moderate position endorsed by the G.I. Forum to the radical philosophy of the Brown Berets, with student groups, who were more accommodating than their rhetoric would suggest, somewhere in the middle. What these various organizations had in common was that they all sought, through the tactics of confrontation, to gain political representation in order to protect their civil rights, and they all rejected sacrificing their heritage for breakneck assimilation into the American mainstream, opting instead for some form of cultural pluralism.