

***Latinos of Boulder County, Colorado,
1900-1980***

**Volume I:
*History and Contributions***

**Chapter Seven:
*Chicano Civil Rights Activism
in the Later 1960s and 1970s***

by

Marjorie K. McIntosh

Distinguished Professor of History Emerita
University of Colorado at Boulder

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Chapter 7

Chicano Civil Rights Activism in the Later 1960s and 1970s

During the period of civil rights activism, Chicano leaders in Boulder County formed organizations and took public action. Refusing to be treated as second-class citizens and calling attention to forms of institutionalized racism, these residents demanded correction for problems that limited options for Latino adults and children and subjected them to unequal treatment. As was true for many Chicano activists throughout the country, they found school boards, municipal governments, and other institutions of power maddeningly unresponsive.¹ Their ability to force change was, however, constrained by their moderate stance. Their organizations did not organize mass protests or affiliate with more radical groups, such as Corky Gonzales's Crusade for Justice, based in Denver, or even with the United Mexican American Students (UMAS) at the University of Colorado.² Although some young people in Boulder, especially at the university, were prepared to use militant tactics, the men and women who ran the associations of local Chicanos chose to use peaceful means in their attempt to bring about improvements for their people.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, the activities of Chicano students on the University of Colorado's Boulder campus became part of the county's broader history. Not only were there many more Spanish-surnamed

¹ For Chicano activism in Colorado more generally, see "La Raza de Colorado: El Movimiento."

² For various representations of this controversial leader and organization, see Ernesto Vigil, "Rodolfo Gonzales," John Chávez, *The Lost Land*, pp. 141-144, and Acuña, *Occupied America*, pp. 308-309.

students, their forceful stance and participation in national protest movements had an impact on the surrounding community. At the end of the 1960s the university set up a special program to recruit intelligent young Latinas/os who did not meet admissions criteria based the types of high school classes taken or grades received but showed promise. Hundreds of these students came to the campus, where—influenced by the wider civil rights movements of the period—they formed organizations of their own. UMAS was the main Chicano student group in Boulder, demanding changes from the university and becoming increasingly militant as its demands were refused or ignored. In addition to taking over several campus buildings, the students orchestrated mass protests, marches through the community, and boycotts of local stores in response to national issues. In 1974, six young people—most of them currently or previously active in UMAS—were killed in two car bombings. It is still not clear how the bombings occurred, but “Los Seis de Boulder” became symbols of the Chicano cause.

This disrupted period ended in 1980 with the shooting of two young unarmed Latinos by an Anglo police officer in Longmont. The response of the Latino community is an admirable example of determination to work for long-term change. Rather than resorting to violence, Latinas/os pulled together and formed an organization called El Comité to present its concerns about the police to city officials. Because little progress was being made, Latino leaders asked the U.S. Department of Justice to send in a mediator. The resulting recommendations, which were implicitly critical of the police, gave El Comité a recognized position as the representative of Latino residents.

A. Political Action by Boulder County Residents

During the late 1960s and 1970s, Chicano activists from local families drew public attention to forms of discrimination and worked to eliminate them. This meant abandoning any attempt to live quietly and respectably, without attracting notice from the Anglo community. When Emma Gomez Martinez was interviewed in 2013, she described the previous attitude toward racist practices and why it was hard for people to stand up against them. Until the mid-1960s,

Spanish-speaking people were very quiet about all these problems. You heard about them when families got together at weddings or parties or something, and they discussed it within themselves, but I never remember anyone saying, "Well, we must do something about it." And we didn't get any advice from those in power to change the discrimination and lack of employment, lack of education, and looking for work. Those were things that were discussed privately, in homes. I understood that they were embarrassed because, once you feel this discrimination, it kind of scorches your soul. It's not too hard to understand, but it keeps people down. You don't have the courage to voice it and get out and do something about it.³

Starting in the later 1960s, however, some Boulder County Latinas/os displayed new assertiveness and organization. Although many families, especially those with labor union connections, had traditionally been Democrats, very few people had even considered running for office. In 1969, however, two men were elected or appointed to their communities' town councils, the first Latinos to join those groups.⁴ Thomas Lopez was elected to Lafayette's council, continuing until 1975; in his last two years there, he served as mayor of the town.⁵ Ben Rodriguez was appointed as a council member in Longmont in December, 1969 to fill a vacated position for one of the wards. Two years later he was elected to that seat, which he held until 1979. These men did not campaign specifically as Latinos, but they demonstrated that Latinos could indeed hold political office. In another sign of change, Longmont in 1975 held its first election that provided ballots in Spanish as well as English.⁶ The entry into politics of a few Boulder County Latinas/os was paralleled in Denver and at the state level by the rise of Latino leaders like Richard T. Castro and Federico Peña.⁷

More important in terms of improving the lives of local Latinas/os as a whole were the various associations created in the late 1960s and 1970s to address current problems within the community. Local Chicano leaders were now determined to make their voices heard, to speak out on behalf of their people. Displaying oppositional consciousness as they analyzed and confronted the forms of institutionalized racism

³ Martinez, Emma Gomez, interview, 2013.

⁴ "Latino elected officials," for this and below.

⁵ Lopez, Thomas, interview, 1986.

⁶ "First bilingual election in Longmont."

⁷ No references were found here to Viva Kennedy clubs, popular in the 1960s, which encouraged some Latinos elsewhere to become politically active.

that restricted Latino lives, they banded together to push for change in such areas as the failure of the school system to provide an appropriate education for Latino children, police misconduct, and the shortage of Latinas/os in government positions. They demanded equal access to good housing, ending what had been some degree of de facto residential segregation.⁸

The local Chicano fight against racism gained some of its strength from people whose education, employment, and assurance gave their voices extra weight. Many of the key figures were working in OEO organizations and/or had college degrees. Yet Latinos cooperated effectively across the socio-economic range, and members of older families allied with newly arrived ones. Women were active members of those groups, but there is no evidence of a separate feminist movement among town-based Latinas, no attempt to create a distinctively Chicana identity or organizations.⁹ At the University of Colorado, by contrast, progressive feminist Chicanas were campaigning for greater visibility for women and their issues within the emerging field of Chicana/o Studies and for more Chicana faculty members and students.

We know about the activity of these community organizations thanks to newspaper accounts and the preservation of some of their own records, rare among small local groups. Their efforts warrant close attention, for they illustrate grass-roots civil rights work in action. Yet the limited results achieved by these associations highlight the challenge faced by many other civil rights organizations in the country at the time: how could they force conservative leaders and institutions to accept and implement new policies and allocate funds in ways that would benefit under-represented groups if the only weapons they were prepared to use were presenting factual evidence and logical arguments?

Putting pressure on the schools

Boulder County's Chicano parents and community leaders pushed the public schools to make changes that would improve the quality of education for Latino children. Their efforts were in keeping with two Supreme Court decisions that identified Mexican Americans as "a

⁸ See Vol. II, Ch. 2B.

⁹ This contrasts with militant Chicana activism in Texas and California (Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*, pp. 99-126, and Salas, *Soldaderas*, chs. 6-7). A few local women did participate in a Chicana conference at the university (Chacon, Susie, interview, 1977). For Chicana students' involvement in UMAS at the university, see section B below.

distinct class” or “an identifiable ethnic-minority group.”¹⁰ These rulings allowed Latinas/os to demand an end to segregation or discrimination in the schools based upon their ethnicity. In Boulder County, Chicano educational activists confronted considerable resistance to change among the Anglos who filled the School Boards and among some teachers and parents. The improvements Chicanos proposed and the opposition they faced sound painfully similar to efforts being made by people of color and multicultural educators in many parts of the U.S. in the 2010s to broaden the curriculum and staff of schools and become more responsive to the needs of every child.

In the early 1970s, local Chicano activists had a set of interrelated educational goals. They wanted bilingual education, so Spanish-speaking children would not be ashamed but could instead begin their schooling in a language they knew while at the same time acquiring competence in English. They argued further that all children would profit from an inclusive, multicultural curriculum, one that offered a better preparation for life in a diverse society. More Latino teachers would provide valuable role models for children and increase job opportunities. Better advising for Latino students and more practical training courses would lessen dropouts, while increased scholarship money for post-secondary education would provide an incentive for staying in school.

We know most about what happened in Longmont, a town still heavily dominated by conservative Anglo families in social and political terms. Newspaper accounts describe the interactions between a group that initially called itself “Los Chicanos para la Justicia” and the Board of Education of the St. Vrain Valley Public Schools across ten months in 1971. The *Boulder Daily Camera* noted on February 11 that parents in Longmont were calling for a Chicano advisory committee to address such issues as the lack of teachers who were able to relate to Chicano students and inadequate counseling programs for Latinas/os and low-income children, resulting in a high dropout rate.¹¹ On March 3, the *Longmont Times-Call* reported that Los Chicanos had presented a list of demands to the Board of Education at a previous meeting.¹² Their demands (they were not merely called “requests”) included the following: that a committee be appointed to improve educational

¹⁰ *Hernandez v. Texas* (1954) and *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi ISD* (1970), as discussed in Donato and Hanson, “Legally White, Socially ‘Mexican.’”

¹¹ “Chicano Advisory Groups criticize district.”

¹² “Chicanos win bid for school advisory role.”

opportunities for Spanish-surnamed students; that students be allowed to celebrate Mexican Independence Day; that a Chicano Studies program be instituted in the schools; that the dress code be abolished; and that busing in east Longmont (where many Latino families lived) be investigated for inequities.

Thirty representatives of Los Chicanos met for three hours with school board members on March 3 to go over those demands.¹³ The Chicanos came from a wide spectrum within the Latino community. The report of the meeting gives a clear impression that by its end the school board and administrators had decided they needed to do something to appease angry Chicanos. The easiest way to do that, without giving up any real authority, was to agree to the creation of a seven-member Mexican-American advisory committee to work with two district administrators. John Martinez, speaking for Los Chicanos, stressed that the most pressing duty before the new committee would be to recruit and hire Mexican-American teachers. Superintendent John Stephens, when asked for exact statistics, said that 6 of the 504 teachers in the district had Spanish surnames; among students, however, around 1,100 of the total enrollment of 10,900 had Spanish names. School board members and administrators noted the difficulty they had experienced in finding Mexican-American teachers interested in working in the St. Vrain district. While they said they looked forward to having help from the advisory committee in recruitment, they were unwilling to let the committee have any power in hiring.

The school board agreed to none of Los Chicanos' other demands.¹⁴ The group had argued that discrimination was "not open and blatant, it's more subtle." It took such forms as advising Chicano students that their test scores indicated they should go into vocational training, not college prep courses, and it appeared in "the Anglo orientation of subject matter and activities." When pushed about a Chicano Studies program, including a class on Chicano history or sociology, the assistant superintendent for instruction said that steps had already been taken through the introduction of a class on minority literature. "He admitted, however, that the course was not taught by minority teachers, which met with some group disapproval." Los Chicanos also objected to the suggestion that mini-courses on Chicano history might be offered on a pass-fail basis. "Isn't this still a form of invidious discrimination?" one

¹³ Ibid, for this paragraph.

¹⁴ Ibid.

member of the group asked. The organization attacked the district's dress code as discriminatory, for it prohibited girls from wearing blue jeans to school. "How many of our girls can afford pantsuits?"

Two months later, the newly created advisory body, which now called itself the "Chicano Citizens Committee," delivered a five-point statement at a meeting of the Board of Education.¹⁵ After Ben Romero, chairman of the committee, described their proposals for improving relations between Chicanos and the board, Angelo Velasquez expressed concern that the group was being "used" by the district. Why, he asked, "is it our duty to do all the work in planning a Chicano Studies curriculum? We'll aid, but as far as taking the initiative . . ." He also pointed out that fewer Chicanos had graduated from Longmont High School in 1971 than in the previous year. But pressure from the committee may have contributed to the decision to hire two Latinos (a counselor and an earth science teacher) among the nine new staff members offered contracts at that meeting.

By early November of 1971, the group, which the school board henceforth termed the "Chicano Advisory Committee," had submitted a specific budgetary proposal.¹⁶ The plan, which was described in the newspaper beneath the misleadingly optimistic headline, "Chicanos Winning Bid for Special Study Fund," asked for a total of \$61,000. The budget covered in-service training for teachers, a full-time staff member to deal with Chicano issues in the schools, and three human relations staff members to serve as the connection between schools and the Chicano community. The group also requested a study to determine why the dropout rate for Chicano students was so high and monthly reports outlining efforts to recruit Chicano teachers. An article in the *Longmont Times-Call* on November 5 reported that the president of the school board said in an interview that although the full amount would probably not be appropriated, there was a real possibility that some of the request would be funded. Angelo Velasquez pressed school officials to accept the recommendations. "You have demonstrated your good faith so far, but right now this can go either way. The insensitivity of individual teachers in the system is your biggest problem. I think much of this can be corrected with a human relations staff and an effective high-level Chicano administrator."

¹⁵ "Chicanos outline school aims" for this paragraph.

¹⁶ "Chicanos winning bid for \$61,000" for this paragraph. One suspects the board had insisted upon this name for the group, to emphasize that it had only an advisory role.

The hopes of the Chicano Advisory Committee were dashed at the school board meeting on November 10.¹⁷ The board allocated only \$4,500 and for only one part of the proposal: a modest program of in-service training. At the meeting Julius Beauprez, a successful Anglo farmer, argued that money should not be allocated to Chicano issues unless the same was done for all other “immigrant groups.” When Beauprez objected to changing American history books to accommodate minorities, L. B. Adams, a member of the school board, responded, “Histories of this country have never really reflected the history of the Southwest. These folks [Latinos] are Americans, but we have never recognized that in our history books. They have made tremendous religious and cultural contributions that have been ignored for hundreds of years.” But he ended weakly: “I wouldn’t mind seeing a little about their culture in our schools.”

Chicano committee members were frustrated by the decision. Esther Blazón said, “I’m very disappointed in the board’s action tonight. Granting \$4,500 of this proposal is nothing but tokenism.” She stressed that at a bare minimum, the district should hire someone with the specific job of dealing with in-service activities and other Chicano issues. Because people on the Chicano Advisory Committee had other jobs during the day, they did not have the time to develop a successful program on their own. The committee’s spokesman said they would continue to push for hiring a full-time Latino administrator. Several years later, after further complaints and proposals from the Latino community, the St. Vrain board hired Esther Blazón as director of bilingual/bicultural education for the district. By 1975, she was not only working within the schools but also writing forceful editorials for the local papers on behalf of educational inclusivity.¹⁸

Chicano educational activists were organizing in Boulder and Lafayette too, where the schools were part of the Boulder Valley School District. In Boulder, a District Minority Review Committee requested and then demanded in 1971 that the schools introduce a multi-ethnic emphasis within the curriculum, remove stereotypes based on race and ethnicity from teaching materials, and eliminate other kinds of bias.¹⁹ The committee’s growing frustration with the lack of response to their

¹⁷ “Board grants part (\$4,500) of Chicano request” for this paragraph and the next.

¹⁸ E.g., “Why bilingual, bicultural education?”

¹⁹ “Education articles,” *Boulder Daily Camera*, e.g., Feb. 14 and 17, May 10 and 20, June 14, and Aug. 10, 1971. See also Ch. 5C above.

demands led to what the newspaper described as a “heated” meeting with the school board in March, 1972.²⁰

Chicano parents were better organized in Lafayette, where as early as 1969 a Latina had been elected as head of the PTA.²¹ In 1971, they called for more Latino teachers, arguing that they and their children could not communicate with teachers and counselors who were unable to speak their language.²² In May, 1972, 150 Latino students from Lafayette’s elementary and junior/senior high schools, with their parents, participated in a protest march to demand that a Chicano be named as assistant principal of the new high school (Centaurus), which was to open that fall.²³ That march, apparently the only large protest organized by the local Latino community in this period, did not achieve its desired result: an Anglo was appointed as assistant principal. A new group then formed, Concerned Chicanos of Lafayette, headed by Tony Montour, to keep fighting for change.

Chicano efforts to introduce change in the schools met with strong opposition from some Anglos. An example is an unsigned, typed letter sent by “A Citizen of Lafayette” to “Mr. Tony Montour and his Committee.”²⁴ The letter begins,

Will you pause for a moment and consider your opportunities and privileges you have in your own community within this great land of ours? For years there has been no discrimination in our town or within our schools. Stop and think of our Chicano athletes and student leaders. Everyone had school spirit which netted a great school. Now suddenly because of some outside element who is influencing you, you are ready to throw away your self respect and all reason.

The author, who says he or she becomes “irate when you begin on our schools,” comments that if their group can recruit “qualified teachers for Hispano Culture and other areas, great. . . . But if you think education is going to lessen its requirements so unqualified individuals can teach,

²⁰ Ibid., March 21, 1972.

²¹ “Mrs. Tony Garcia heads PTA.”

²² “Education articles,” *Boulder Daily Camera*, e.g., July 20 and 26, 1971.

²³ Ibid., May 5, 1972. For below, see *ibid.*, Aug. 15, 1972.

²⁴ Valdez Papers, MABCU file. The letter is undated but was probably sent later in 1972, when Montour was leading the Concerned Chicanos. He was highly visible at about that time, as he was also running for City Council (Tony Montour, conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, July 29, 2013).

you are wrong.” The letter goes on to defend Anglo teachers, who “are not biased, because their job is to teach if the student has an open mind,” and it attacked special scholarships for Chicano students at the University of Colorado. Mr. Montour’s Committee might carry more weight if it “engulfed all of your race within Lafayette, . . . but there are many of your good people who are just as ‘Fed Up’ as the rest of us.” The letter ends with a threatening paragraph that echoes the repatriation movement of the 1930s: “There are buses, planes and trains leaving for Mexico every day, if you don’t like it here. We are not sitting by quietly. Clean up your minds and thoughts and get back to becoming a community with pride and respect for yourself and your culture.”²⁵ Although that letter expressed particularly hostile views, some degree of racism on the part of many Anglos, including school board members, certainly underlay the resistance faced by Chicano educational activists.

Mexican Americans of Boulder County United

An association founded in 1971 that called itself MABCU [Mexican Americans of Boulder County United] had broader concerns and adopted somewhat more assertive tactics.²⁶ The name was significant in several respects. It indicated that its members came from throughout the county, rather than being focused on a single town, and the term “United” echoed the titles used by more militant groups within the Chicano movement. Yet the group chose to call itself by the older designation of “Mexican American,” and most of its leading figures were college graduates who owned their homes and held responsible jobs, often in education or social services. The group included some newcomers to Boulder County, but many of its members were from established local families.

MABCU grew out of “casual conversations between several members of the Chicano community” about local problems early in 1971, leading to a realization that something needed to be done.²⁷ Its founders had been trying since the late 1960s to reach out to other groups or institutions, including the University of Colorado, in hopes of working collaboratively to improve conditions for all Latinas/os.²⁸ When they received no response or at least no action as the result of these efforts,

²⁵ Valdez Papers, MABCU file.

²⁶ “Mexican-American group formed for County.”

²⁷ Valdez Papers, CU Archives, MABCU file, App. I to “Abstract, Financial Aid Project, and Constitution, MABCU,” for this paragraph and the next.

²⁸ Euvardo Valdez, conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, July 23, 2013.

they decided to set up their own organization.

Five issues troubled MABCU's founders. The first was that "Many Chicano residents of Boulder proper were professionals and as such had a tendency to be unaware about 'grass roots' situations affecting all Chicanos." That was related to a lack of unity between local Chicanos in other respects too—"a truly sad situation"—with gaps especially between students and residents, professionals and laborers, and residents of the various towns. Another concern was that Boulder County's Chicano community "lacked visibility and due recognition from political, social, governmental and civic agencies." Chicano organizations elsewhere in Colorado likewise overlooked people in this area because their numbers were relatively small. Because MABCU expected that more Chicanos would be arriving here as higher education and jobs expanded, it was particularly important to develop and maintain a united front.

After several preliminary meetings, the founders drafted a constitution that was approved by the general membership—numbering around 40—in early March, 1971.²⁹ The group elected its first set of officers. The chairman was Eivaldo Valdez, who had recently moved from New Mexico and was coordinator of community services for the Boulder Valley School District; Phillip Martinez, principal of Burke Elementary School in Boulder, was vice chairman; Emily Chavez, a counselor for Boulder County Planned Parenthood, was secretary; and Art Valdez, director of the Neighborhood Youth Corps of Boulder County (an OEO program), was treasurer. MABCU defined its initial priorities, those requiring immediate attention, as education, human relations, housing, employment, and increased cultural identification and awareness.

Detailed minutes of the monthly meetings of MABCU held over the next few years document the activities of the organization.³⁰ The group invited guests and speakers, including Mayor Robert Knecht of Boulder (who described the formation of MABCU as "a grand idea"), several Chicano members of the state House of Representatives, an officer of the Boulder County Democratic Party, and Len Avila of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee. When Lalo Delgado, Executive Director of the Colorado Migrant Council, an activist group supported by the OEO, spoke to MABCU, he equated Mexican Americans with prisoners, confined geographically and by the many problems facing them; he

²⁹ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, "Constitution."

³⁰ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, minutes.

reminded his listeners that “regardless of your education, ‘prestige,’ position, you as a Chicano are never higher than the lowest Mexican.” Samuel Herrera of the Migrant Action Program (MAP) at the University of Colorado suggested that MABCU and other Chicano organizations in the community join with them in one super-association. Although MABCU decided to contribute \$25 to MAP, it did not affiliate with the group. Hesitation stemmed in part from concern that MAP’s extremist reputation might deter local Latinas/os from joining MABCU.³¹

MABCU put its concerns into practice. It pushed for the hiring of Latinas/os in public positions, followed events on the university campus with interest, and supported efforts to make changes in the local schools that would benefit Chicano and other minority students.³² The group’s activities during the first year of its existence were summarized in a report prepared in March, 1972. It emphasized that a major accomplishment was that “more of us got to know each other better and realized that though we are “diverse in sentiment we can be united in purpose.”³³

MABCU also provided scholarships for people pursuing practical training. It had found that although there were various sources of financial aid to help minority students attend colleges and universities, no such funds were available for “economically disadvantaged persons enrolling in vocational and/or trade schools” within the county, many of whom were working adults.³⁴ MABCU’s grants were generally small, ranging from \$60 to \$370, and given for a single term. Between April and September of 1972, for example, it gave 11 awards totaling \$2,265 to people studying auto mechanics, body and fender work, welding, educational media, office occupations, licensed practical nursing, and cosmetology.³⁵ Most of the recipients, all of whom had Spanish surnames, were studying at the Vo-Tech Center of the Boulder Valley School District, but one was at St. Vrain Valley’s Career Development Center and two at Wheatridge Beauty College.

To generate funds for these grants, MABCU submitted applications to multiple sources.³⁶ IBM awarded money through its Manager of

³¹ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, minutes, October 27, 1971 and Euvaldo Valdez, conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, July 23, 2013.

³² Valdez Papers, MABCU file, minutes, Nov. 30, 1971, and loose correspondence.

³³ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, annual report, 1971-2.

³⁴ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, Abstract, Financial Aid Project.

³⁵ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, Progress Report, Financial Aid Fund.

³⁶ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, financial aid papers.

Communications, Mile High United Way provided \$2,520 through its Special Needs Fund, and the Social Action Fund of St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel in Boulder, which served the university community, contributed \$168.³⁷ Larger and more elaborate applications for \$10,680, submitted to the Campaign for Human Development of the United States Catholic Conference in 1972 and 1973, were not funded.

MABCU was ready to confront the police over harassment and excessive use of force. In 1971, the organization represented a group of Longmont youths in claiming maltreatment by Boulder County sheriff's officers and Boulder city policemen. On July 12, Euvaldo Valdez, as chairman of MABCU, wrote to Brad Leach, the Boulder County sheriff, about an incident that had occurred in Boulder early in the morning of June 13.³⁸ A sheriff's deputy on routine patrol in the area around 34th Street and Valmont stopped to investigate a car, driven by David Duran, which had apparently run into a ditch. While the officer was looking around, nine friends of Duran's who had been attending a party at a nearby apartment showed up, whereupon the deputy called other units from the Boulder police and Colorado State Patrol to the scene. A fight ensued. In his letter to Leach, Valdez said that MABCU was trying to determine "the extent of this confrontation" and asked the sheriff to make available to them the official reports of the incident and set up an appointment to discuss the matter. "Let me assure you that the intent and extent of involvement by our organization is not to conduct a 'witch hunt'. We are sincerely concerned and will cooperate with you to clarify the matter as expediently as possible. I hope that you will also cooperate with us."

In the following week, eight young Chicanos who were present at the altercation on June 13 recorded formal legal affidavits before a Notary Public, describing what they had seen and done.³⁹ They claimed that "a fat cop" had sprayed mace into David Duran's face when he attempted to flee. After handcuffing Duran, that officer and others had beaten him, including while he was lying on the ground, before dragging him into a sheriff's car and taking him to jail. Two other young people, they alleged,

³⁷ Carlos Lucero, an electrical engineer at IBM who was active in MABCU, may have arranged that contribution. For St. Thomas Aquinas, see Vol. II, Ch. 5C.

³⁸ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, police papers. This episode came on top of several conflicts between the police and young Latinos the previous year ("Chicanos throw rocks at Boulder policeman" and "Disturbance on Hill results in arrest").

³⁹ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, unlabeled file folder.

were spread-eagled on the side of a sheriff's car and made to stand there for 15 minutes, hit with a nightstick if they moved. Others, including women, were hit with clubs on their necks or legs when they protested or tried to help their friends. The nine participants other than the driver were then pushed into a car belonging to one of them and told to drive away from the scene.

MABCU brought this incident to the attention of the Boulder Human Relations Commission. At a meeting on July 21, Joe Lucero on behalf of MABCU and Ken Sterne, the Boulder city manager's administrative assistant for human relations, presented a report about the incident.⁴⁰ The Commission concluded that the officers had "used force which appeared . . . to be unwarranted, unnecessary and irresponsible in the circumstances, especially the force used upon the driver of the car and the use of a night stick in striking one of the youths." Norton Steuben, chair of the Commission and a professor of law at the university, wrote to MABCU that his group was "dismayed and deeply disturbed by the unnecessary use of force toward members of the Mexican-American community by various police officers." He outlined the steps the Commission had taken to ensure that the police, sheriff, and city manager would carry out a proper investigation and to see that such incidents did not occur in the future.

The City of Boulder also responded to MABCU's complaint. On July 28, Ted Tedesco, the city manager, reported to Valdez that he had reviewed with Donald Vendel, Boulder's Chief of Police, the file prepared in response to the allegations.⁴¹ "We have both concluded that it appeared that two of our City patrolmen seemed to use excessive force in the circumstances surrounding the incident." After summarizing the City's policy on the use of force, Tedesco said that those two officers "have received appropriate and effective disciplinary action." He also reminded Valdez of his proposal that MABCU work with Ken Sterne to develop a training program to be used by all city departments.

After a long delay, Sheriff Leach wrote to Valdez on August 19, taking a different stance. He said he "could not see where accusations of excessive force should be directed to officers of his department."⁴² To the contrary, he felt "it was a must to commend Lt. Hull for his cool-

⁴⁰ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, police papers.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

headedness at the scene and who, with the assistance of other citizens of the area, contained and disbursed other citizens with calmness and reason." Leach agreed to attend the MABCU meeting on August 31 but failed to appear.

The matter did not end there, for MABCU had helped to arrange for two attorneys from the statewide Chicano civil rights organization El Centro Legal to investigate the case. On August 5, Edwin Lobato and Reyes Martinez (who was to be killed in one of the car bombings in 1974) sent to Valdez a summary and analysis of "the police brutality investigation we have been working on this summer," together with recommended steps to be taken.⁴³ They said that on July 7 they had been requested by Mrs. Eleanor Cruz, director of the Boulder Community Action Center (another OEO program), to look into the incident and meet with some of the young people involved, as well as with representatives of MABCU and Ken Sterne. That meeting led to a request that Lobato and Martinez conduct a full investigation. Sterne asked them, however, to exhaust administrative remedies within the relevant units first, initiating legal action only if those initial efforts proved unsatisfactory. The two lawyers arranged for the young participants to give formal affidavits, and they held additional meetings with city officials, police officers, and Sheriff Leach. Leach, who claimed that he had not yet been fully apprised of the situation, agreed to look into the matter and report his findings.

Lobato and Martinez concluded that "the results of the investigation and administrative remedies have been most unsatisfactory. As of yet, Mr. Leach has not responded to the complaint submitted on behalf of the Chicano youth by the Mexican-American United Organization. It is rather unfortunate for the residents of Boulder County that the Sheriff's Office has manifested such indifference and lack of co-operation and non-responsiveness to the needs and demands of the Chicano Community."⁴⁴ They noted also that the "appropriate and effective disciplinary action" taken against two officers of the Boulder City Police Department as reported by Mr. Tedesco was "less than adequate compensation for the physical injury and degrading insult sustained by the youths as a result of the officers' misconduct." They stressed that the treatment of "David Duran, who suffered extreme bodily injury, illegal incarceration for a period of several days, and subsequent non-judicial dispatch to California

⁴³ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, police papers, Lobato/Martinez report.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

by his probation officer,” is “especially indicative of the shortcomings of the Boulder County law enforcement agencies.”

Lobato and Martinez also criticized Ken Sterne. Sterne had “privately sought our trust and co-operation” in resolving the matter and said he wanted to establish a rapport with the Chicano community. They therefore agreed to work with him, “despite the centuries-old Anglo tradition of deceiving the Chicano people with empty promises. Much to our chagrin, our trust and cooperation was misplaced and abused once again. Mr. Sterne is but another example of a limp and incompetent liaison.”⁴⁵

The two attorneys made some specific recommendations. (1) They should be authorized to initiate judicial proceedings, filing a civil complaint without further delay. (2) Mr. Sterne should be removed from his position, and a Chicano, screened and selected by MABCU, be named in his place. (3) The practices and procedures of the Boulder Sheriff’s office should be subjected to an intensive investigation by a Citizen Review Board composed of members from all ethnic groups in Boulder County. (4) More stringent measures should be taken against the officers involved in the incident and their superiors, and those actions should be made known to the general public. (5) MABCU should call a press conference and report to the media the results of this investigation.⁴⁶ MABCU’s records do not indicate if those recommendations were implemented in full, but a later note says the incident was “resolved in favor of the kids.”

That episode—and Sheriff Leach’s failure to respond to it—had political repercussions as well. On August 15, Paul Hagen, a member of the Boulder County Democratic Party’s Executive Committee and the Colorado Democratic Party’s Equal Rights Commission, wrote to Leach.⁴⁷ After reviewing the meetings that had been held with the sheriff and the lack of any answer or investigation, Hagen made a pointed comment: “As a fellow Democrat, . . . I would ask your urgent consideration in lieu of the possibility of seriously alienating the Mexican American community, all of whom voted for you in the last election.” He also reminded Leach that the Republican County Commissioners were attempting to discredit his work. “The conclusions are obvious.”

MABCU became embroiled in another incident involving the police a

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, police papers.

few months later. The group's challenge of the Lafayette City Manager's decision to take strong precautionary measures at the time of a public address by Rodolpho ("Corky") Gonzales links local events to the wider history of *El Movimiento*. On the evening of August 20, 1971, Gonzales, a Chicano activist and poet who headed the increasingly militant Crusade for Justice based in Denver, gave a speech at Lafayette High School. We do not know who organized the event, but it indicates that at least some Boulder County Chicanos were interested in what Gonzales was advocating. The local police had received a tip-off from an informer in Denver that Gonzales was going to promote violence in his speech. Lafayette therefore called in extra police units from surrounding towns, the county sheriff, and the state police. The local police also evacuated the adjacent elementary school and set up a riot control center there. A witness remembers seeing police cars from all over the region streaming bumper-to-bumper into Lafayette and a helicopter circling overhead, though whether the latter belonged to law enforcement or the press is not clear.⁴⁸ At the event itself, the police mounted an extensive presence within the auditorium, which the largely Latino audience found intimidating. No march or disruption grew out of Gonzales's speech, and he may never have intended such an outcome.

MABCU sent a letter of protest to Richard Flewelling, Lafayette's city manager, referring, among other charges, to a police helicopter hovering over the town that evening. Demanding a formal apology from the city of Lafayette, the group forwarded copies of its complaint to the governor, the county commissioners, a city councilman, the chairman of the Police Investigation Commission, the Colorado Civil Rights Commission, and the head of the Boulder chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Their allegations elicited several replies. A. W. De Novellis, a Lafayette councilman, wrote to the MABCU members who had signed the letter, saying that he was at the event in question and their charges were exaggerated.⁴⁹ "Lafayette did, for the protection of all people concerned, take the usual precautionary measures deemed necessary, but did not by any means go to the lengths as you outlined in your letter." After stating his sympathy for Mexican Americans in many situations, he said he did not support all the issues raised by groups representing them. "There are many good points brought about by the work of Mr Gonzales, but again

⁴⁸ Eleanor Montour, conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, July 29, 2013.

⁴⁹ Valdez Papers, MABCU file, Lafayette papers.

there are a few which I term as radical and unnecessary to the cause of the Mexican people." De Novellis stated that he was willing to negotiate but "not tolerate demands, no matter which group presents them." He ended more diplomatically: "Although I do not deem a public apology is warranted as you demanded, I will sincerely say I regret tremendously the mis-understanding which arose from the Gonzales incident."

City Manager Flewelling sent a more hostile response. He began, "I would certainly advise each of you who signed the letter to be certain of your facts before sending any further communications of this type to any public official."⁵⁰ He said that the city of Lafayette, "acting upon information received from Denver intelligence," had requested neighboring agencies to provide help if needed. The City had indeed obtained permission to use a nearby elementary school, but no weapons, gas, or any other riot control equipment were placed there. No police helicopter was present over the city that evening, nor was any order issued by a public official requesting the closing of a Lafayette school or business on that occasion. Mr. Flewelling concluded,

No public official can ignore a legitimate warning from another law enforcement agency in this era of national internal strife. Our preparation was mild and simply involved an alert and nothing else. The citizens of Lafayette, of all races, deserve protection of the highest order we can provide; we will continue to offer this protection in a logical, restrained fashion. I would hope that if further letters are forthcoming from your group, that they are written more responsibly, with greater attention to fact and less false indignation. It is you who owe the apology to the citizens of Lafayette for composition of this heresay document.

He copied his letter to all those who received MABCU's complaint.

Two months later, John Murphy, the chairman of the Boulder chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, wrote to Mr. Flewelling, saying that MABCU had asked his group to look into the incident in Lafayette.⁵¹ Their investigation was not complete, but he presented some tentative conclusions. "On the one hand, it seems unreasonable, and provocative of trouble, for the police and city officials to have used such extreme measures in reaction to a mere rumor. Further, one group in the population, the Mexican Americans, were singled out as dangerous,

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

and therefore justifiably felt harassed and intimidated. Further the situation that was created was hardly conducive to free assembly and to free speech (Mr. Gonzales's talk)." But, Mr. Murphy noted, MABCU "seem to have exaggerated somewhat their account of what happened on 20 August." He concluded, "The A.C.L.U. is very much concerned with problems of this sort, and will be keeping an eye on future events."

Over the next few years, MABCU's energy waned. Its limited success in trying to force change led some of its members to question whether a confrontational approach was the best way to achieve real improvement for Latinas/os.

The Boulder Council of LULAC

Another local organization, founded in 1973, had similar goals to MABCU and a partially overlapping membership but a different structure and method of operating. This was the Boulder County Council of LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens. LULAC was a nation-wide association composed largely of middle class Latinas/os.⁵² In a notice sent out from the national headquarters sometime in the 1970s, LULAC reported that it had been founded in Texas in 1927 with several goals: the preservation of Latin culture; and better educational and employment opportunities, housing, health services, and economic development ventures for "Latin Americans of Mexican-American, South American or Caribbean descent."⁵³ Around 1974, LULAC had local councils in 33 states, with more than 256,000 members.

The Latinos who formed Boulder County's Council felt that being part of a national organization would offer some benefits.⁵⁴ They hoped also to draw in new members who had worried that MABCU was too aggressive. Avoiding direct conflict, Boulder's LULAC chapter was prepared to work with elected officials and institutions like the police, believing that discussion and cooperation were most likely to achieve lasting change. A more conciliatory attitude was further strengthened by the car bombings of 1974. Few local Chicanos supported violence, and the death of "Los Seis de Boulder" reinforced a sense that pushing too hard could be not just counterproductive but also dangerous.

⁵² Acuña, *Occupied America*, pp. 183-184 and 223-224, and Manuel Gonzales, *Mexicanos*, pp. 181-184.

⁵³ Valdez Papers, LULAC file, "League of United Latin American Citizens," mimeographed notice, undated but 1973-4.

⁵⁴ Eivaldo Valdez, conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, July 23, 2013.

One concern of the local LULAC Council was what its members perceived as the racist attitudes of the Boulder Police Department. After helping in 1974 to arrange for the retirement of Chief Donald Vendel, due to his unwillingness to respond to Chicano concerns, LULAC took part in selecting his successor, John Barber, and then worked closely with him. On Sept. 30, 1975, for example, Philip Hernandez, an active member of LULAC, wrote to Barber reminding him that at a recent meeting, the group had “made a commitment to lend assistance to your department in recruiting Chicano applicants for the Police Department.”⁵⁵ Barber had also asked LULAC to call to his attention any individuals who submitted an application to the city, saying he would “make every effort to see that they at least were interviewed.” Hernandez’s letter listed three Mexican Americans who had applied for positions with the Police Department within the past few months. He commented that the police department and LULAC shared the goal of hiring people with the potential to become good police officers, but in addition LULAC wanted to help the police “to establish credibility in the Mexican American community.” He ended by saying that those goals “are by no means mutually exclusive. Let’s work together.”

By 1977, when its records become fuller, Boulder’s LULAC Council was well organized and carrying out an ambitious array of activities. At a meeting on March 15, the 11 members present (out of 24 in the full group) elected new officers and then moved through an agenda that included contacts with other LULAC units, a decision to participate in its National Scholarship Program, and the possibility of hiring a paid staff member.⁵⁶ The group passed a resolution supporting a conference to be held in April at the University of Colorado on “La Chicana,” for which several Boulder women active in LULAC served as co-organizers or panelists.⁵⁷ A big project sponsored by the council was to take 100 low-income Latino children to a Denver Bears baseball game on a Saturday in April.⁵⁸

LULAC also raised money for college scholarships for Latino students,

⁵⁵ Valdez Papers, LULAC file, carbon copy of letter.

⁵⁶ Valdez Papers, LULAC file, minutes. Those elected were Ralph Chacon, President; Armando Gingras, Vice-President; Terry Aragon, Secretary; Euvaldo Valdez, Treasurer.

⁵⁷ Valdez Papers, LULAC file, flyer and mimeographed program. Susie Chacon, a business owner in Boulder, remembered the Chicana Conference of 1977 as a breakthrough, for it was organized on campus but included women from the community too (Chacon, Susie, interview, 1977).

⁵⁸ Valdez Papers, LULAC file, mimeographed flyer and newspaper clipping.

screened applicants, and awarded funds. Their recipients came from a different pool of people than those who had received MABCU's awards for vocational or trade schools. People chosen in August, 1978 included two recent graduates of Boulder or Erie High Schools who planned to attend the University of Northern Colorado to study education; two graduates of Fairview or Centaurus High School who planned to major in business at the University of Colorado or the University of Northern Colorado; one nursing student at the University of Colorado Medical School; and one doctoral student at the University of Colorado.⁵⁹ Additional students were assisted in the following years.⁶⁰

In one of the newspaper articles that announced these scholarships, LULAC was described as "a community service organization of citizens of Hispanic background." That conservative wording reflects the shift in emphasis that distinguished LULAC's activities in the later 1970s from MABCU's work in the early 1970s. Although MABCU and the LULAC Council continued to meet into the 1980s, the fire of both movements had dimmed. Their leaders felt that although they had achieved some gains for Latinas/os, they were expending a good deal of energy with modest results.

B. Chicano Students at CU-Boulder, Organizations, and "Los Seis de Boulder"

Whereas the University of Colorado has appeared only in passing in earlier parts of this book, activities on campus became part of the general history of Boulder County's Latinas/os during the later 1960s and 1970s. Prior to that time, the few Latinos who attended the university, starting in the 1890s, came almost entirely from land-owning families in southern Colorado or northern New Mexico.⁶¹ Most of these *ricos* identified with Anglo students on campus, not with the even smaller number of African or Asian Americans. But that situation changed quite dramatically at the end of the 1960s, due largely to the Migrant Action Program [MAP] run by the university and the federally funded Educational Opportunity Program [EOP]. The new Chicano students were active not only on campus but also in the town, as they tried to raise awareness of wider causes.

⁵⁹ Valdez Papers, LULAC file, copies of letters and press releases.

⁶⁰ Valdez Papers, LULAC file, newspaper clippings.

⁶¹ Hays, "A Quiet Campaign of Education."

MAP and the arrival of new Chicano students

The Migrant Action Program was an experiment created around 1967 by Howard Higman and Bob Turner, faculty members at the University of Colorado.⁶² Influenced by the philosophy of the OEO programs, they believed that many talented Latino children in Colorado who came from poor families and had gone to mediocre schools, especially the children of farm workers, could succeed in higher education if unnecessarily rigid admissions requirements were modified and if they received sufficient financial aid and good advising. MAP's organizers went out to recruit students, working initially with agricultural families in the San Luis Valley. The population of the Valley was overwhelmingly rural, and it had a low standard of living and very poor schools; few Latinas/os had finished high school. Soon MAP extended its program to students from other rural areas and to disadvantaged Latinas/os from urban communities, particularly Denver. MAP's representatives told prospective students that they could be accepted into the university without the usual requirements and would be given financial aid. Once on campus, they were supposed to receive extra academic and personal support. These recruitment efforts were highly successful. Between 1967 and 1969, the number of Latino students at Boulder rose from no more than 100 to about 500; by the summer of 1972, the program had recruited 950 students from throughout the state, though they did not all enroll.⁶³ The project was funded primarily by the EOP.

The students who arrived in Boulder through MAP and EOP had very different backgrounds than earlier Latinos. They were visually and socially different from their Anglo classmates at the university, and many of them hung together for support in an unwelcoming academic, economic, and cultural world that was unlike what they had previously known. A moving story about her acceptance and arrival at the university thanks to MAP was told by Cleo Jaramillo Estrada, who was a counselor in the multi-cultural advising center at the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2013, as she had been for many years.⁶⁴ Cleo grew up in Center, a small community in the San Luis Valley dominated by large

⁶² Garcia, Richard, interview, 2013.

⁶³ Hernandez, Philip, interview, 2013; "UMAS y MEChA." Very few of these students show up in the *City Directory* listings, as they generally lived on campus.

⁶⁴ Estrada, Cleopatra, interview, 2013, and "Estrada, Cleo, autobiographical information" for this and the following paragraphs.

commercial farms owned by Anglos. Her grandparents had moved up from northern New Mexico, and her father was employed by the lumberyard, a good job by local standards. Her mother worked in the fields, as did Cleo and all of her seven siblings when they were not actually in school. They thinned and weeded lettuce in the spring and summer, hoed potatoes, and dug them up in the fall. In her interview, Cleo choked up when describing how, after an exhausting day of pulling up potatoes, when the children's backs ached so much they cried, her mother (whose back ached too) would give them all backrubs before she started cooking dinner for the family.

Cleo did very well in high school and hoped that one day she might be able to save up enough money to go to Adams State College, though no teacher or counselor at her school ever suggested that she could go to college. Adams State was in Alamosa, a town about 30 miles from Center where Cleo's family went once at the end of every summer to buy new shoes for the children to wear to school. In August, 1969, however, a few months after her high school graduation, Cleo was approached while working in the fields by her aunt Jenny Sanchez, a community organizer for an OEO program in Center. Jenny had heard that the University of Colorado had started a program of special scholarships for the children of farm workers and had nominated Cleo; she had just been notified that Cleo was accepted. "You are going to college," she announced, to Cleo's total surprise. In preparation, Cleo, who knew how to sew, made herself several dresses of the kind she had seen college girls in Alamosa wearing.

A few weeks later Jenny took Cleo to Boulder, where she registered and became a member of what was known on campus as MAP-EOP. Cleo was amazed at how undemanding her life as a university student was. She did not have to perform any physical work: all she was expected to do now was read, which she loved. "I started taking classes, and I thought, 'Man, this is so easy! If people even knew how hard it is to go from row to row [in the fields] all day long, but here you get to read a book.'" She called her mom with the astonishing news that she had maid service: Mexican women came into her dormitory room to sweep the floor, dust her dresser, and take the sheets. "Who knew that Boulder existed, and that people were treated like kings and queens here?"

Cleo experienced a different kind of culture shock when meeting Chicano students from other backgrounds. When she arrived on campus she was told that as her work-study job, she would be the secretary to a student group called UMAS. Cleo knew nothing about UMAS, so she

put on one of her new dresses and walked over to its office. When she opened the door, petite Cleo found several “really big girls from Denver” wearing military fatigues staring at her! “They were kind of rough and tough, and they were scary!” One of them said, “Why’re you wearing that cute little pink dress for?” Later they became good friends, and she was able to tell them, “You guys scared the h--- out of me! But way down deep inside they were just as scared as I was. Just that they were from Denver and I’m from the Valley. And they didn’t speak Spanish, and they were kind of intimidated by my speaking Spanish.” Gradually Cleo found that she could express her own opinions effectively, even though she came from a rural community, and that people paid attention to her suggestions and arguments.

Other MAP students entered the university in different ways. Ricardo Garcia had grown up in Monte Vista in the San Luis Valley but dropped out of high school.⁶⁵ His brother-in-law was one of the first people to come to the University of Colorado thanks to MAP, in 1968, and he kept telling Ricardo, who was married and working in Denver, to apply. When Ricardo finally submitted an application to MAP, he was accepted, provided that he get his GED first; he took a 5-hour exam and passed. He and his wife moved to Boulder, and he entered CU in the fall of 1970. Augustine Eliseo Cordova, who was likewise from the Valley and had not finished high school, was involved with activist groups there and in New Mexico and California for several years before he came to visit a brother in Boulder, learned about MAP, and applied to the university.⁶⁶

MAP and EOP later affected some young Latinas/os living in the town of Boulder. The town’s Latino residents had traditionally been sharply divided from the university, even though the Water + Goss Streets neighborhood where many of them lived lay just at the base of University Hill. Latino parents in Boulder generally wanted their children to go through middle school and ideally high school, but even bright students were not expected to go further. Boulder High School rarely placed Latino children into the college-preparatory track or advised them to continue into higher education.⁶⁷ Latinas/os might work for the university (often in unskilled jobs), but they did not study there. Virginia Maestas, who dropped out of school in the middle of ninth grade, remembered

⁶⁵ Garcia, Richard, interview, 2013; see also Ch. 6C above.

⁶⁶ Cordova, Augustine E., interview, 2013.

⁶⁷ See Vol. II, Ch. 6B.

looking wistfully up at the Hill in the early 1970s, knowing it was off-limits: college was for whites.⁶⁸ So it was a major change when diversity outreach programs on campus began to spill over into the surrounding community.

That impact is seen in the experience of Linda Arroyo-Holmstrom, who was raised in the Water + Goss Streets area. Her parents thought that finishing high school was important, and Boulder High had put her into a secretarial track.⁶⁹ But Linda's older sister Candy was dating a boy who worked for MAP on campus, and in 1972 he told Candy that she could apply to the university through that program and helped her to do so.⁷⁰ Linda decided that if her sister could go to CU-Boulder, so could she. After her acceptance into the university two years later, Linda took special MAP courses in the summer, to get her feet on the ground. From then on the program provided good advising and support but also close supervision. She lived at home, and once after she had been sick for several days, "Knock, knock, knock, somebody from the MAP program was at my door wanting to know why I wasn't in classes."

Some Latinas/os came to the university as mature students. Maria Dora Esquivel arrived in Boulder in 1972, together with her 16-year-old son David.⁷¹ She became a leader in UMAS and after graduation continued to work on Chicano causes, building ties with the American Indian Movement, the rebels in Nicaragua, and the Communist Party. Esther Blazón, who finished high school only after her three children were born, graduated from CU in 1974, when her children were in elementary school.⁷²

Student organizations

The new Chicano students at the university set up their own organizations, as was true on campuses throughout the Southwest.⁷³ UMAS was the first to form and initially the most active, but later other students formed a chapter of MEChA (*Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanos de*

⁶⁸ Conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, July 31, 2013.

⁶⁹ Arroyo-Holmstrom, Linda, interview, 2013.

⁷⁰ Candy studied in Mexico during her junior year and as a senior was a teaching assistant in an English class run for MAP students (Arroyo, Candace, interview, 1977).

⁷¹ Young, David Atekpätzin, interview, 2013.

⁷² "Esther Blazón and family, 1974," and see Ch. 6C above.

⁷³ For the Chicano student movement more generally and the role of the EOP, see Muñoz, *Youth, Identity, Power*, and Acuña, *Occupied America*, pp. 301-304, 310-313, and 341-345.

Aztlán), a national association. The groups at the University of Colorado had several goals: to provide a welcoming home and support for Chicano students; to put pressure on the university to make what they saw as necessary improvements; and to carry out educational activities and protests within the wider community. While the students agreed on the need to push for better treatment of Latinas/os, they did not agree on strategies: some supported the approach taken by Cesar Chavez and the farm workers in California, using strikes and peaceful mass protests, while other gravitated toward the more militant and occasionally violent approach of Corky Gonzales and the Crusade for Justice. *La Raza Unida* Party, founded in Texas in 1970 and later popular in Colorado too, opened the exciting possibility of a viable Chicano presence in politics.

Between 1969 and 1974, UMAS was very active at CU-Boulder.⁷⁴ The students demanded more scholarship funds for Latinas/os, better advising, more Chicano faculty members, and Chicano Studies courses. UMAS also organized protests against other kinds of racism—on campus and elsewhere—and against the Vietnam War. (For Chicano activists, the war was bad for two reasons: a disproportionate number of Latinos and other people of color were being drafted into the military and killed after being sent into high-risk settings; and the war was fought by what they regarded as a neo-colonial power against a nationalist movement organized by oppressed local people.)

Cleo Jaramillo became a committed member of UMAS, though she preferred not to give speeches but rather to make signs, bring food, and be sure people had the information they needed.⁷⁵ Shortly after arriving on campus she participated in the sit-in/take-over of the financial aid office to protest the shortage of scholarships for students of color and the late payment of the stipends on which many of these students relied; hundreds of other students were meanwhile demonstrating outside the building. After massive protests in 1972, the University expelled around 200 Chicano student activists. In spring, 1974, Cleo helped with UMAS's occupation of a building that housed all the university's affirmative action programs: MAP, the various other EOP units, and offices for UMAS, black students, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. The take-over, which caused no physical damage or harm to people but kept faculty and

⁷⁴ For film footage of Chicano student activism in Colorado, see "La Raza de Colorado: El Movimiento."

⁷⁵ Estrada, Cleopatra, interview, 2013.

staff members out of their offices, stemmed from UMAS's demands that the organization be allowed to handle its own finances and that the two administrators of the campus EOP be fired and replaced by people more responsive to the students' actual needs.

Augustine Eliseo Cordova, another active member of UMAS, focused on different projects: organizing boycotts, and providing music.⁷⁶ In their picketing, the students stood with signs outside stores in downtown Boulder and handed out literature explaining why people should refuse to shop there. They boycotted Safeway because the chain was selling lettuce and grapes, whereas the students were in solidarity with a lettuce workers' strike in Center and with Cesar Chavez and the grape workers' strike in California. They boycotted liquor stores, because they were selling California wines and Coors beer, the latter produced by a Colorado company that supported far right political causes and was thought to treat minority workers badly.

Augustine was also a musician, composing and writing songs, performing them with others, and taking part in the street theater events that UMAS students from Boulder presented on campuses all through the Southwest to raise public consciousness about Chicano issues. Two of his songs, "Yo Soy Chicano" and "Los Seis de Boulder," became anthems for the wider Chicano student movement.⁷⁷

In these same years, student groups were agitating for change at Colorado State University in Fort Collins too. Edwina Salazar, later the director of Longmont's OUR Center for people living in poverty, was a student at Colorado State in 1968-1970, having previously worked in the defense industry in California.⁷⁸ She remembered that student radicals burned down the oldest building on campus, though she did not participate in that event, and she heard black civil rights leader Ralph Abernathy speak. Many protests and vigils were held on the campus: against the Vietnam War, when Martin Luther King was assassinated, and after the shooting of Kent State students in Ohio. Dr. Gregory Jaramillo, later the director of Salud Family Health Center in Longmont, was active

⁷⁶ Cordova, Augustine E., interview, 2013.

⁷⁷ Neither Cordova or the BCLHP could find old recordings of them, though a snippet from the latter was included in "La Raza de Colorado: El Movimiento." Augustine therefore kindly re-recorded his songs for the BCLHP, and they are now available on its website. For audios and English lyrics of the songs, see Sources, Pt. A below, under his name.

⁷⁸ Salazar, Edwina, interview, 2013.

<p>Yo Soy Chicano Words and Music by Augustine E. Cordova ©1977, 2014</p> <p>Yo soy Chicano, puro Chicano. Si no les gusta, pues a ver. . a ver. . a ver! Tengo una historia, llena de gloria. Llevo en las venas, la sangre de mi querer.</p> <p>El nuevo mundo, no me comprende. Me llaman nombres, otras cosas que no se. Pero les digo, cuidense amigos. Porque el que no se cae hoy ese cae mañana.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Coro</p> <p>Soy NUEVO Mexicano, tambien soy de Tejas. Soy de Arizona, California. . . Colorado. Soy campesino, tambien vivo en las ciudades. Por todo el mundo, vivo y canto mi cancion.</p> <p>Tengo enemigos, y yo les digo. Traigo la sangre bien caliente no hagan pleito. Yo soy Chicano, puro Chicano. Han de saber que vengo a ser, si me hacen dano.</p> <p>Yo soy Chicano, puro Chicano. No mido a nadie, porque a mi me han de medir. Desde el pasado, me condenaron, a ser esclavo pero no les consenti.</p>
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Illus. 7.1. Augustine E. Cordova, "Yo Soy Chicano," lyrics in Spanish

in UMAS and MEChA at Colorado State, where he was an undergraduate in the early 1970s.⁷⁹ Those groups supported the American Indian Movement, whose protest on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota in 1973 developed into an armed standoff with U.S. Marshalls and the F.B.I. that lasted for 71 days and caused several deaths.

Former student activists at CU-Boulder looking back on the early 1970s highlighted the idealism and hope that permeated their organizations as they worked together toward important goals. Augustine Cordova noted that the members of UMAS had hot arguments about tactics.⁸⁰ But, he concluded,

It was beautiful because we had community. There were so many of us there, and we had to fight for everything that we got, . . . but everybody was so involved and so together. . . . You didn't mind getting up on Saturday and going to a rally or a march or boycott . . . because it was community. You see your *compadres* over there and your friends, and some would bring food, and I was always there doing the music.

In an email about re-recording his two songs, Augustine wrote:

⁷⁹ Jaramillo, Gregory, interview, 2013.

⁸⁰ Cordova, Augustine E., interview, 2013.

It warms my heart to know you are using the music to portray the emotion of the times. We would sing at all gatherings. Marches, demonstrations, *teatro*. Music united us in a way that no other medium could. There were no disagreements when we were singing . . . we were one.⁸¹

Commenting also on how exciting the academic environment was (he was taking courses in history, geography, and sociology as well as computer science), Augustine concluded, “Boulder was an absolutely awesome experience. . . . For me, it doesn’t get any better than that.”⁸²

Ricardo Garcia, who was selected as the student director of MAP in 1973, similarly recalled the energy and optimism of that period. “Man, it was such an exciting time when you go back and think about the Chicano Movement and all the different possibilities that could happen. The emotions that we all had for progress, for improvement and all of that.”⁸³ He remembered the marches that UMAS organized down Broadway and the picketing and boycotts. When Corky Gonzales held a convention for *La Raza Unida* Party on the Boulder campus, the students hoped this was the beginning of a third party that would bring the concerns of Chicanos into public view. But Garcia also noted that “we were confronted with a lot of the racism and all the negative factors around trying to do a social movement in a pretty much all-white community where people didn’t really understand.”

Those negative factors were serious. The university and Boulder’s police were alarmed by the degree of student militancy and organization. UMAS repeatedly presented demands to campus administrators, but the authorities generally refused even to meet with the students and certainly did not agree to the changes requested. In some cases, the university used force to break up protests—using its own police backed by city officers. Cleo remembered running across the campus, “and there would be tear gas thrown, and people would be screaming and yelling, and police were all over the place.”⁸⁴ Chicano students were not the only ones upset, she said. “There was a lot of anger about everything, politically. Even the white students were angry, they called themselves anti-establishment. They were fighting against being pigeon-holed in

⁸¹ Email sent to Marjorie McIntosh, March 14, 2014.

⁸² Cordova, Augustine E., interview, 2013.

⁸³ He later used the English version of his first name: Garcia, Richard, interview, 2013.

⁸⁴ Estrada, Cleopatra, interview, 2013.

this 1950s model of just following the rules and being conservative.” Cleo felt that in a longer perspective UMAS had forced the administration to examine its policies and procedures with respect to students of color and make gradual improvements.

Not all Latino students were part of or even necessarily in agreement with the aggressive stance of some Chicano militants. Phil Hernandez, who was the head of UMAS in the late 1960s, remembers walking into the office of the university’s president, Joseph Smiley, and saying, “We want 2,000 Mexican American kids on campus next year, or you may not have a campus!”⁸⁵ Yet he later felt uncomfortable as UMAS became more radical, and he resented being treated with disrespect by some Chicano activists because he was too moderate. Susie Gomez Chacon, a mature student at CU in the 1970s who owned a restaurant in Boulder, thought that Latino students should not be pressured to join groups like MAP or UMAS.⁸⁶ She wanted to be able to pay her tuition and take whatever courses she chose, apparently not defining herself primarily as a Chicana.

The university’s few Latino faculty members and even fewer low-level administrators were caught between intense Chicano students and the upper administration. Professors were commonly criticized vehemently by student groups if they did not back their demands, and administrators were accused of being sell-outs. Al Ramirez, hired by the university’s Psychology Department as a beginning professor in 1971, later described the situation.⁸⁷ The university had suddenly accepted a large number of Latino students but was not prepared to deal with their self-definition as Chicanos or their demands and protests. The administration’s refusal to negotiate intensified the conflict. Chicano professors found themselves in the middle, with no acceptable ground to stand on. Ramirez emphasized that the University of Colorado was a focal point for what became the wider Chicano movement of that period. Although people commonly stress Corky Gonzales and the strikes of high school students in Denver, Ramirez believed that it was in fact Boulder’s Chicano student organizations that defined the key issues.

⁸⁵ Hernandez, Philip, interview, 2013, and conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, Sept. 25, 2013.

⁸⁶ Chacon, Susie, interview, 1977.

⁸⁷ Ramirez, Albert, interview, 2013, for this paragraph. See also his *Profe Files*, a slightly fictionalized account of the experiences of a Latino faculty member at the University of Colorado in the 1970s.

Los Seis de Boulder
 Words and Music by Augustine E. Cordova
 © 1974, 2014

<p>Voy a cantar un corrido, que . . . en Colorado paso. Murieron Los Seis de Boulder, dos noches en Mayo, en Seteinta y Cuatro.</p> <p>Era una noche ocupada, cuando de pronto llevo. Ese bombazo hieloso, como a las ocho, tres vidas llevo.</p> <p>Amenecio la manana, alli en la sierra yo vi. El alma de Neva Romero, subiendo hacia el cielo, sonriendo hasta el fin.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coro</u></p> <p>En este cielo de sierra, de Colorado se ven. Las almas de seis soldados, seis fusilados, seis hijos del bien.</p>	<p>Cuando se acabo la buya, dos noches despues sucedio. Murieron tres mas soldados, tres mas fusilados, Granados cayo.</p> <p>Teran, Jacola, y Martinez, Francisco Dougherty tambien. Nunca seran olvidados, siempre alabados, soldados del bien.</p> <p>La ley les dijo a la gente, una mentira les dio. Que murieron por su descuido, que por su propio descuido, la bomba exploto.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Coro</u></p>
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Illus. 7.2. Augustine E. Cordova, "Los Seis de Boulder," lyrics in Spanish

"Los Seis de Boulder"

On the night of May 27, 1974, 19 days into the UMAS take-over of the building on campus that housed the various minority programs, a bomb exploded in a car at Chautauqua Park on the edge of Boulder, killing three people.⁸⁸ Neva Romero, a 21-year-old junior at the university, was part of a coalition of students who had recently won election as heads of the University of Colorado's Associated Student Government; she was the first Latina to hold such office. Reyes Martinez, 26, a graduate of the university's Law School, was the attorney with El Centro Legal whom we have met before, and his girlfriend, Una Jaakola, 24, was a graduate of the university. Two nights later another car bomb went off in a parking lot in downtown Boulder. Those killed were Francisco Dougherty, 20, a Latino pre-med student from Texas, and two former UMAS leaders now working in the community (both also writers or artists): Heriberto Teran, 24, and Florencio Granado, 31. Antonio Alcantar, who was walking over to the car at the time, survived, though he lost a leg and was

⁸⁸ For this discussion, see "'Los Seis de Boulder' died in '74," "Los Seis de Boulder," Pts. I and II, KGNU radio, 2011, "Los Seis de Boulder" as aired nationally, 2011, and "Marchers Remember deaths of Los Seis." For Chautauqua Park in 2013, see "Boulder, film of places of historical importance."

severely burned. The Boulder police conducted a brief investigation and announced that the young people had been making bombs that exploded on them. Neva Romero, the report said, had been holding a bomb in her lap. The evidence taken by the police was then destroyed. A grand jury was later summoned to look into the bombings, but its findings were never announced and it produced no indictments.

Various explanations have been put forward about how and why the bombings occurred.⁸⁹ One theory suggests infiltration of the upper leadership of UMAS by the F.B.I.'s Counter Intelligence Program, whose charge was to weaken or destroy radical organizations. COINTELPRO, which is known to have had agents inside other activist groups in Colorado, may have placed representatives within UMAS as well, gathering information that allowed someone to plant bombs in or under the cars and thereby discredit the organization. Rapid destruction of the physical evidence by the police and the silence of the grand jury imply that information had been discovered that the government did not want made public. Some Chicano leaders believed that "Los Seis" were murdered as part of a conspiracy against their movement. A few people wondered if the bombs might have been planted by an opposing unit within the Chicano movement itself, such as a breakaway element of the Crusade for Justice.

It is conceivable that the young people had become so frustrated by the refusal of the authorities to accept their demands that they were indeed making bombs, but ones they planned to use against property, not people. Several bombs had gone off in Boulder during the previous three months, at night in empty but symbolic public buildings: the County Court House, the university's police station, and an elementary school where parents were demanding change. The perpetrators were never identified, though some people suspected the Weather Underground, an extreme left-wing group active in university towns throughout the county between 1971 and 1975 that placed bombs in various government buildings and banks elsewhere. Could Los Seis have been making bombs, perhaps encouraged to do so by COINTELPRO agents and using the deliberately defective material provided to them? Because the F.B.I. sometimes placed false information into the files of people it was tracking, we cannot trust the written evidence and will

⁸⁹ Even in 2013-14, "Los Seis" remained such a controversial topic among Latinos, with emotions still running so high, that several people who spoke with this author about what happened asked not to be named.

probably never be sure exactly what happened.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, to some Latinas/os then and now, “Los Seis” have been seen as martyrs.⁹¹

The deaths put a temporary damper on the Chicano student movement at the University of Colorado. Most UMAS students did not endorse physical violence.⁹² They were frightened as well as angered by what had happened to people they liked and respected, especially because no one knew definitely how the explosions had occurred. UMAS continued to function, joined by MEChA, but its tactics became less directly confrontational. As was true in the local community, some student leaders decided that a certain degree of cooperation was more likely to yield long-term improvement for students of color, especially since some members of the university administration were now willing to work with them.

The contributions of CU-Boulder’s Chicano student activists took two main forms. They did gradually persuade the university administration to make many of the changes they demanded. The campus had more Latino students and faculty members, a more diverse curriculum, and a somewhat more welcoming atmosphere in 1980 than it had in 1966. But of even greater importance is what leaders of MAP-EOP and UMAS gave to the state later in their lives. A remarkable number of them went into some kind of educational or community service work, in many cases becoming heads of their organizations. Their names appear in Colorado’s political life too, led by Joe Garcia: he was active in UMAS as an undergraduate, went on to Harvard Law School, later became President of Colorado State University at Pueblo, and was elected Lieutenant Governor in 2010 and 2014. The long-term contributions of the Chicano student activists of the 1970s should be remembered and honored.

C. The Shootings in Longmont and Founding of El Comité, 1980

A tragic set of quick decisions by a rookie Anglo policeman led to the death of two young Latinos in Longmont in 1980. Late in the evening of August 14, an officer named John Davis stopped a car on Main Street

⁹⁰ E.g., the file of Leonard Peltier of the American Indian Movement.

⁹¹ That view was the basis for a commemorative event held at Su Teatro in Denver in May, 2014, the 40th anniversary of the bombings.

⁹² Augustine Cordova, conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, May 11, 2013.

for a minor infraction.⁹³ A second policeman, 22-year-old Glenn Herner, who had been in the force for only three months, was driving by at the time. When he heard the driver arguing with Davis, he pulled his car up behind Davis's. At that point, a Monte Carlo drove slowly past them, filled with young people who had left a wedding reception to get more ice for the party. The driver and three of the passengers were Latino. The other person in the front seat was an Anglo, who leaned out of the window and shouted at the policemen, "[Expletive] you, pigs!" Herner got in his car and set off after them, followed by Davis. When Herner stopped the Monte Carlo in a parking lot near 11th Avenue and Main Street, the driver offered his identification. Herner was only interested in the man who had shouted at him: "I want you with the big mouth," he said, pointing to the blond passenger. The latter got out of the car, but when he realized that Herner was going to issue him a ticket for harassment, he refused to show his ID and tried to leave the scene. Both Herner and Davis—who had now arrived—struggled to subdue him. The driver of the car and one of the other passengers left the scene.

But two of the men, both aged 21, stayed there to help their friend: Jeff "Beaver" Cordova, who had recently finished serving in the Army, and Juan Luis Garcia. In the fight that followed, Herner pulled his gun and shot Garcia in the chest, apparently because he thought the flashlight Garcia was holding was a weapon. Shortly afterwards, Davis fired a shot into the air, and Cordova began to run across Main Street. Herner, who did not see who fired the second shot, thought that Cordova had wounded Davis and was fleeing with his gun. He therefore took aim across the hood of his cruiser and shot Cordova in the back. Garcia died immediately, and Cordova died in the hospital a few hours later. Neither Cordova nor Garcia was armed.

The response of Longmont's Latino community to the shootings demonstrates how a tragic event can lead to constructive change. News of the deaths spread quickly in that town and the wider civil rights community. In the coming days local activists held meetings in the basement of St. John's Catholic Church and organized a candle-lit march, ending at city hall.⁹⁴ Large crowds attended the funerals of Cordova and

⁹³ The account in the next two paragraphs is based upon newspaper accounts and information from the inquest, hearing, and investigations that followed the shootings: "2 men shot by police," "100 protest in Longmont," "Inquest into shooting deaths," "Driver recalls night of shooting," and "One officer fired both bullets."

⁹⁴ "Sorrow, anger, hope fill meeting" and "Crowds bid farewell to victims."

Garcia. Emotions ran high among Anglos as well as Latinas/os. Tony Gomez was in junior high in Longmont at the time. He later recalled that shortly after the shootings he was “walking down the street and these white guys drove by and yelled at me, ‘Too bad there weren’t more of you f----ing Mexicans killed.’ That’s what they said. They didn’t scare me. I just went [middle-finger sign].”⁹⁵ Although some Anglo leaders rejected all criticism of the police and city officials, the events led to soul-searching among others. Even the normally conservative *Longmont Times-Call* published articles examining local biases against Latinos and deploring the city’s lack of an affirmative action hiring policy.⁹⁶

Latino community leaders attempting to deal with the situation formed a group that called itself “El Comité.” El Comité immediately made three vital philosophical decisions, ones that shaped their actions over the coming months and years.⁹⁷ They committed themselves to using a non-emotional approach and rejecting violence; preventing militants from outside Longmont from inflaming the situation; and including a cross-section of the community in their work. Juan Luis Garcia’s brother Frank went around Latino neighborhoods, encouraging people to use only peaceful forms of protest. El Comité’s leaders turned down offers from outside groups (including the Crusade for Justice, the American Indian Movement, and the Communist Workers’ Party) to come into Longmont to organize violent action. Tony Tafoya of El Comité responded to one of the groups, “If you burn down buildings, we’ll be left with the ashes.”

El Comité’s efforts to interact constructively with Longmont’s City Council and Police Department stemmed from its desire to establish long-term policies and procedures that would address a series of problems that had been building up over time and prevent similar tragedies from happening in the future. At the first negotiating session with city officials on August 17, just three days after the shooting, El Comité laid out its demands.⁹⁸ Charging that Longmont police officers commonly harassed Latinas/os, the group’s list included a ride-along

⁹⁵ Gomez, Tony, interview, 2009.

⁹⁶ “Old friends, new faces,” “Formal affirmative action plan lacking,” and “Boulder ‘affirmative action’ aggressive.”

⁹⁷ That approach was strongly recommended by one of El Comité’s leaders, Tony Tafoya, then the Equal Opportunity Director for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Boulder. The rest of this paragraph is from Tafoya’s conversation with Marjorie McIntosh, Dec. 5, 2014.

⁹⁸ “El Comité presents list of demands.”

program for civilians to go out with the police, a hotline for reporting incidents, and city-funded polygraphs (lie detector tests) for people who claimed they had been mistreated. The group asked also for an outside evaluation of the police and city administration and the appointment of a neutral person, hired by the city, to serve as an ongoing intermediary with the Latino community.

At the August 17 meeting, the city was represented by mayor Robert Askey, a councilman, the city manager, the city attorney, and Ed Camp, the Director of Public Safety, who was to be a strong ally of El Comité. Although some of the city's representatives said individually that certain of the demands could perhaps be met, they were unwilling to recommend to the City Council that they all be accepted. El Comité's chairman and vice chairman, Vic Vela and Dan Benavidez, accused the mayor and City Council of lack of good faith in refusing to negotiate with them directly.

To strengthen its bargaining position, El Comité defined itself more fully. By the end of August, its original officers had been joined by ten others, including teachers, government employees, an administrator with the Boulder County Youth Action Center, a secretary, and a restaurant owner.⁹⁹ Among them was Marta Moreno, described by the newspaper as "a housewife active in church and community activities." Due to its formal structure, the group was able to take a more unified and forceful stand.

But even with that change, El Comité lacked the power to compel Longmont to introduce the measures they sought. The group therefore turned to agencies of the U.S. government for help in persuading city officials to find out what had actually happened at the shootings, to get justice for those killed, and to develop better policies and procedures. During the two weeks after August 14, the *Times-Call* reported that first the U.S. Attorney General and then the F.B.I. had been asked to investigate the shootings.¹⁰⁰ Those inquiries apparently did not happen, but a different solution emerged through the U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ].

Within a few days after the shooting, the DOJ received more than 30 requests from Latino groups and individuals to send a representative to Longmont to act as a mediator.¹⁰¹ The DOJ agreed, so that "tensions can

⁹⁹ "El Comite, City to focus on police-community relations." For Marta Moreno's role in church matters, see Vol. II, Ch. 5C.

¹⁰⁰ "U.S. Attorney General asked to investigate" and "FBI to investigate shootings."

¹⁰¹ "FBI to investigate shootings."

be eased and the waters calmed.” When Leo Cardenas, regional director of the Community Relations Service of the DOJ, arrived, he found that the Latino community had no faith in the goodwill of city officials or their commitment to introducing necessary changes. He learned also that the shootings came on top of a long series of lesser conflicts between the police and local Latinas/os, especially young people. He therefore sent Manuel Salinas and Art Montoya from his agency to attend and mediate all meetings between El Comité and the city or police.¹⁰² Salinas said on August 26 that he would stay as long as both parties felt he was playing a meaningful part.

The DOJ’s representatives remained in Longmont for another month. After extensive negotiations, a Document of Understanding was signed on September 23 between: (1) Robert Askey as mayor of the City of Longmont; (2) Vic Vela, Frank Garcia, and Dan Benavidez on behalf of El Comité; and (3) Manuel Salinas for the DOJ.¹⁰³ The agreement laid out the background to the tragedy and described the desire of all parties to foster “greater trust between the citizens of the Longmont Hispanic Community, the elected representatives and employees of the City, particularly those serving as police officers, and generally the entire populace of the City.” It noted that the specific commitments it contained had been accepted by unanimous vote of the Longmont City Council. Those commitments were the same demands previously laid out by El Comité, though with provisions that allowed the city some degree of input and supervision. The agreement served its purpose of lessening tension and providing legitimate channels for reporting and addressing problems.

Thanks largely to El Comité’s vigilance in responding quickly to potentially volatile situations, Longmont’s Latinas/os kept the peace across the following year even at some difficult moments. Glenn Herner was tried for manslaughter in March, 1981. When he was acquitted, the Latino community was furious but again refused to resort to violence.¹⁰⁴ With the encouragement of other Latinas/os, El Comité set itself up as an ongoing association with three main purposes: to act as a

¹⁰² “El Comite presents list of demands” and “El Comite, City to focus on police-community relations.”

¹⁰³ “Document of understanding.” This document was kindly made available to the BCLHP by Dan Benavidez. For his account of his own role after the shootings and his subsequent career in Longmont’s government, see *For All the Wrong Reasons*, chs. 12-13.

¹⁰⁴ “Articles about Glenn Herner’s acquittal.”

negotiating body for Latino concerns; to improve the social, educational, and economic status of Latinas/os; and to facilitate communication and understanding between Latinos and non-Latinos.¹⁰⁵ The first anniversary of the shootings, in August, 1981, featured commemorations but no confrontations.¹⁰⁶ The *Times-Call* published an article describing El Comité's achievements and continued to report on the activities of the group in the following decades.¹⁰⁷

Although some of the items to which the City of Longmont agreed in 1980 were no longer being honored as of the early 2010s, El Comité remained the town's leading Latino organization. In addition to providing practical assistance in the form of a food bank and helping people to find housing, it offered legal advice, ran citizenship classes, did voter registration, published monthly newsletters, and took over the Adult Education program when the St. Vrain Valley School District ran out of funds to support it. Its long serving head, Marta Moreno, was someone to whom Latinas/os knew they could turn for advice, whether they had been wrongly laid off from their job, lacked health insurance and could not obtain necessary medical care for their children, or had a teen-aged son who had been stopped by the police for a driving error and now faced deportation.

Although pressure for reforms by local Latinas/os did not end in 1980, its intensity died down and it commonly took somewhat different forms. Chicano leaders in Boulder County had taken important steps during the later 1960s and 1970s by creating a positive, socially engaged Chicano identity and working for better treatment for all Latinas/os. Chicano students at the University of Colorado had brought issues of national and local concern to the attention of local residents and had helped to make the university more diverse and welcoming to students and faculty of color. The shootings in Longmont and El Comité's response provide a model for how a tragic episode can be turned into an opportunity for lasting community improvement. Latinas/os of the early twenty-first century enjoy many of the benefits their predecessors worked so hard to achieve.

¹⁰⁵ "El Comite seeks permanent status," Tafoya, conversation with McIntosh, Dec. 5, 2014, and a PowerPoint presentation prepared by El Comité in May, 2002, which summarizes its history (kindly given to the BCLHP by Tony Tafoya).

¹⁰⁶ "Shooting anniversary passes without incident."

¹⁰⁷ "El Comite's first-year accomplishments," *Longmont Times-Call* index entries, El Comité," and *Longmont Times-Call* index entries, Marta Moreno." For El Comité's building in 2013, see "Longmont, film of places of historical importance."

List of Illustrations, with Credits

All the images listed below are hyperlinked to their original online sources. They can be viewed by clicking on the underlined blue text at the end of each entry. Those that have a reference number beginning with “BCLHP” are on the Boulder County Latino History website:

<http://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/>

It contains hundreds of additional photos and other types of material as well.

- 7.1. Augustine Cordova, “Yo Soy Chicano,” lyrics in Spanish. Courtesy of Augustine Cordova. [BCLHP-MKM-780](#).
- 7.2. Augustine Cordova, “Los Seis de Boulder,” lyrics in Spanish. Courtesy of Augustine Cordova. [BCLHP-MKM-781](#).

Sources

Explanations

Most of the items listed below are hyperlinked to their original online sources. They can be viewed by clicking on the underlined blue text at the end of each entry.

BCLHP Collection, Carnegie Library. Materials collected by the Boulder County Latino History Project, 2013-2014. Deposited at Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library.

BCLHP references.¹ These provide the ID number for items accessible on the Boulder County Latino History website, bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu. It contains hundreds of other sources, which can be searched in various ways.

If a given item contains multiple pages on the website, only the initial ID number is shown here; the following pages are linked to that one.

Carnegie Library. Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library.

LM. Longmont Museum.

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Information cited as from a conversation with Marjorie McIntosh on a stated date has been confirmed in writing and approved for use in this study by the authors of those statements.

All websites listed below were last accessed November 10-18, 2015.

¹ For entries with a BCLHP reference:

- Items labelled as FP are family photographs loaned by community members and digitized by the BCLHP. The photographers are unknown unless specified.
- Items labelled as LHS are photos loaned to the Longmont Hispanic Study in 1987-8 by a relative or descendent of the people shown. They were converted into slides by Oli Olivas Duncan for use in public presentations associated with the 1988 publication of *We, Too, Came to Stay: A History of the Longmont Hispanic Community*, which she edited. In 2014, the BCLHP was given permission to make digital copies of the slides, many of which showed unidentified people. The dates, locations, and photographers of these photos are unknown unless specified.

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