



There Was a Woman: La Llorona from Folklore to Popular Culture

Domino Renee Perez

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"How is it that there are so many lloronas?" A haunting figure of Mexican oral and literary traditions, La Llorona permeates the consciousness of her folk community. From a ghost who haunts the riverbank to a murderous mother condemned to wander the earth after killing her own children in an act of revenge or grief, the Weeping Woman has evolved within Chicana@ imaginations across centuries, yet no truly comprehensive examination of her impact existed until now. Tracing La Llorona from ancient oral tradition to her appearance in contemporary material culture, *There Was a Woman* delves into the intriguing transformations of this provocative icon.

From La Llorona's roots in legend to the revisions of her story and her exaltation as a symbol of resistance, Domino Renee Perez illuminates her many permutations as seductress, hag, demon, or pitiful woman. Perez draws on more than two hundred artifacts to provide vivid representations of the ways in which these perceived identities are woven from abstract notions—such as morality or nationalism—and from concrete, often misunderstood concepts from advertising to television and literature. The result is a rich and intricate survey of a powerful figure who continues to be reconfigured.

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