

## **Tiny aka Lisa Gray-Garcia's Biography**

Incarcerated for Crimes of Poverty  
That's being homeless,  
Being poor  
And being on welfare  
In this Capitalist Society  
Currently At-risk  
Of Falling Back in the Cracks  
On this earth  
To save the world  
Through the Word  
And in the process  
Me and mines....

Tiny grew up in a houseless, criminalized family in the United States. Left as her mother's sole caregiver at the age of only 11, Tiny and her mother, Dee turned to art, writing and organizing for survival. Together, ten years ago, they founded from nothing, POOR Magazine, a non-profit, grassroots, literary visual arts-based organization dedicated to reframing the news, issues and solutions from a perspective rarely seen or heard in the mainstream media: the perspective of poor people.

POOR Magazine provides vocational training, creative arts and literacy education and new and multi-media access to very low and no income adults and children in the Bay Area. Through the mediums of radio, television and the internet, Tiny has worked tirelessly to get the voices of those living in poverty heard, as she herself struggles being a single, poor, mixed race mama.

In addition she is a poet, writer, radio producer and teacher on issues of racism, poverty, homelessness and disability, as well as the founder of welfareQUEENS, a performance project with the goal of reclaiming the racist classist stereotypes about poor single mamas and papas. Her own memoir about growing up homeless in the richest country in the world, Criminal of Poverty: Growing up Homeless in America, has just been published by City Lights books and sheds light on the real roots of poverty from the voice of a true scholar.