

# Cause for an alternative

by Tricia Romano

When Becky Bell, a 17 year-old Indiana girl, found out she was pregnant, she did what some in her situation have done: she took her own life.

Raised with a strict background, Becky may have felt she had nowhere to turn. The Indiana law required those under the age of 18 to gain parental consent in order to have an abortion. Becky did not tell her parents and seemingly took a more simple way out of such a mature dilemma. It was a Pyrrhic victory.

In Los Angeles, Debbie Patino heard about Becky's

case and several others. What she saw angered her, and with her strict Catholic upbringing, she could understand the young girl's dilemma. Patino decided that she could contribute to the cause of abortion rights for women.

A singer/songwriter and producer, Patino knew many local artists, and with their help she has compiled the spoken word CD called *Cause*, of which it's profits go directly to Rock for Choice and the Feminist Majority.

The CD features artists from Mary's Danish (Gretchen Seager, Julie Ritter), L7 (Suzi Gardner), Exene Cervenka and many others, who voiced their concern for

women's rights.

"I think that it's (anti-abortion movement) just a way to discriminate and control women," said Patino. "For me, it's just a civil rights thing....There are a lot of people in our country who don't have basic rights. It was a way for me to take control of my life."

The spoken word format is currently picking up ground, with even the hardcore rocker Henry Rollins taking to the form. Spoken word is cheap to produce and, most importantly, it gets straight to the point.

"One of the biggest reasons (I chose spoken word) is cost. I don't really have any money

to donate to this charity, and (the fact) that I could make a record, and I work at a record company and know all of these artists (made it easier). We did it for under \$500," said Patino, explaining that through the spoken word media, she could generate a larger amount of profit to donate to the charity.

"The artists that I had picked, it was mostly their first time out doing spoken word. Spoken word is really intimate. It's a cost effective grass roots record," said Patino.

One of the featured artists on the CD is Laura B. from the band They Eat Their Own. She participated in *Cause*, for many of the same reasons that Patino created it.

"I grew up in New York. I had a protective, restrictive mother," said the singer. "It

(parental consent law) places a tremendous burden on young teenagers."

"It's terrible that the religious right wing can tell everyone else how to live their lives," she said of the Pro-life movement.

Patino agreed. "Who is to decide what is moral, what is ethical? I'm against organized religion. It's egotistical and a bad mistake to think that everything we have (in abortion rights) could not be taken away.

"Anything could happen." Those wishing to donate and receive a *Cause* CD can call (213)-651-0495.



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