

# MEET THE BLOGGERS

**Sandi T.**

**Age:** 37 **Location:** New York City

**Blog:** *TheLesbianMafia.podomatic.com*, a kind of sapphic Jerky Boys in which Sandi crank-calls hapless straights to hilarious effect

**Date launched:** March 2007 **Visitors per month:** 45,000 **Why you started:** I really needed to laugh, take my mind off of some things, and vent. So many of us live ashamed, silent, afraid, and we've become so apathetic and unresponsive to modern sexism. Lesbians really need to decompress. So I act like an idiot with my friends for everyone to listen to and judge. Sometimes I even say something that makes sense.

**Purpose of blog:** To switch the focus onto "them." We're so busy defending ourselves all the time, we forget that we have our own feelings. Maybe we think their lifestyle is disgusting! Not that everyone agrees with what I, or anyone else on the show, have to say, but it is undoubtedly a collective lesbian perspective. **Year you quit your day job:** I haven't. **Biggest advertiser:** I really tried to steer clear of advertising for as long as possible, but it costs to keep a show going. Remix Fridays, a women's party here in NYC, is my first sponsor/advertiser. **Three cons of blogging:** 1. The more popular the show becomes, the less time I have to correspond with listeners. 2. You just don't know what crazy person could be listening or why. 3. Women in related fields can be unfriendly and competitive.

—JANET TRAKIN



## Best Dad Ever?

*Offended by Wisconsin's ban on gay marriage, one straight Christian Republican father takes his state to court* BY MICHELLE GARCIA

WHEN Wisconsin voters passed a constitutional ban on gay marriage in 2006, Bill McConkey, 65, was outraged. Saying he was too old to stage a riot, the hetero University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh political science professor filed a lawsuit against the state. McConkey says the amendment required voters to answer two questions at once—first, whether marriage should be constitutionally defined as a union between a man and a woman, and second, whether any legal status “substantially similar” to marriage (i.e., civil unions) should be recognized by the state—violating a Wisconsin mandate requiring ballot measures be asked separately when amending the constitution. He's been granted the right to argue the technicality on May 15 in court. And when it's all over, this father of seven—all girls—hopes to see his lesbian daughter get married just like her sisters.

**What made you decide to sue Wisconsin?** From a constitutional

view, I was aghast. The legislature asked Wisconsin voters to say that we can select groups of people, single them out, and deprive them of constitutional protections that everyone else gets. Also, I have a gay daughter, and this “defense of marriage” silliness offended me to no end. If you want to defend marriage, outlaw divorce, make adultery a felony, and close the bars at 9.



Father knows best: McConkey

**How has the process been?** I don't have money—I put six kids through college and paid for a bunch of weddings—so I filed a lawsuit. I'm smart enough to know I can challenge this constitutional amendment on a formality. I didn't even hire an attorney; couldn't afford one. I said to one of my friends, “I've been thrown out of better bars than this one. They don't scare me.”

**Have you made new friends and enemies?** I have new friends I never dreamed I'd have. I've made some enemies too, ranging from those who crawl out from under a rock and those who think they have an intellectual disagreement on the ability of the legislature to pass a constitutional amendment, to those who think I'm going to hell. I've been called names. Some of the mail I've gotten has been disgusting.

**How would others challenge the ban in their states?** Learn how to file a lawsuit without a lawyer, file it, and keep trying to file it. The thing that we've learned from social movements, whether civil rights or the Vietnam War, is that they don't quit. They keep pounding and making change. Every time there's a decision against us, take that argument, analyze it, figure out why it's wrong, and show the court why it's wrong.

## BY THE NUMBERS: DON'T-HOLD-YOUR-BREATH EDITION

1865

Thirteenth Amendment abolishes slavery.

1920

Nineteenth Amendment grants suffrage to women.

2003

Supreme Court decriminalizes gay sex.

2008

The United States has its most viable African-American and female presidential candidates yet.

2120

When we can expect a viable gay presidential candidate, given the average number of years it took the electorate to accept the first two minority candidates.