

How Dr. Frank Kameny got fired, got angry, and changed the world



White House protest, 1965

Dr. Jane Rigby
Observational Cosmology Lab
& JWST Project
NASA GSFC

Who was Frank Kameny?



WWII
combat
veteran



Astronomer,
1948-1957



Fired civil
servant, 1958



Activist,
1958-2011

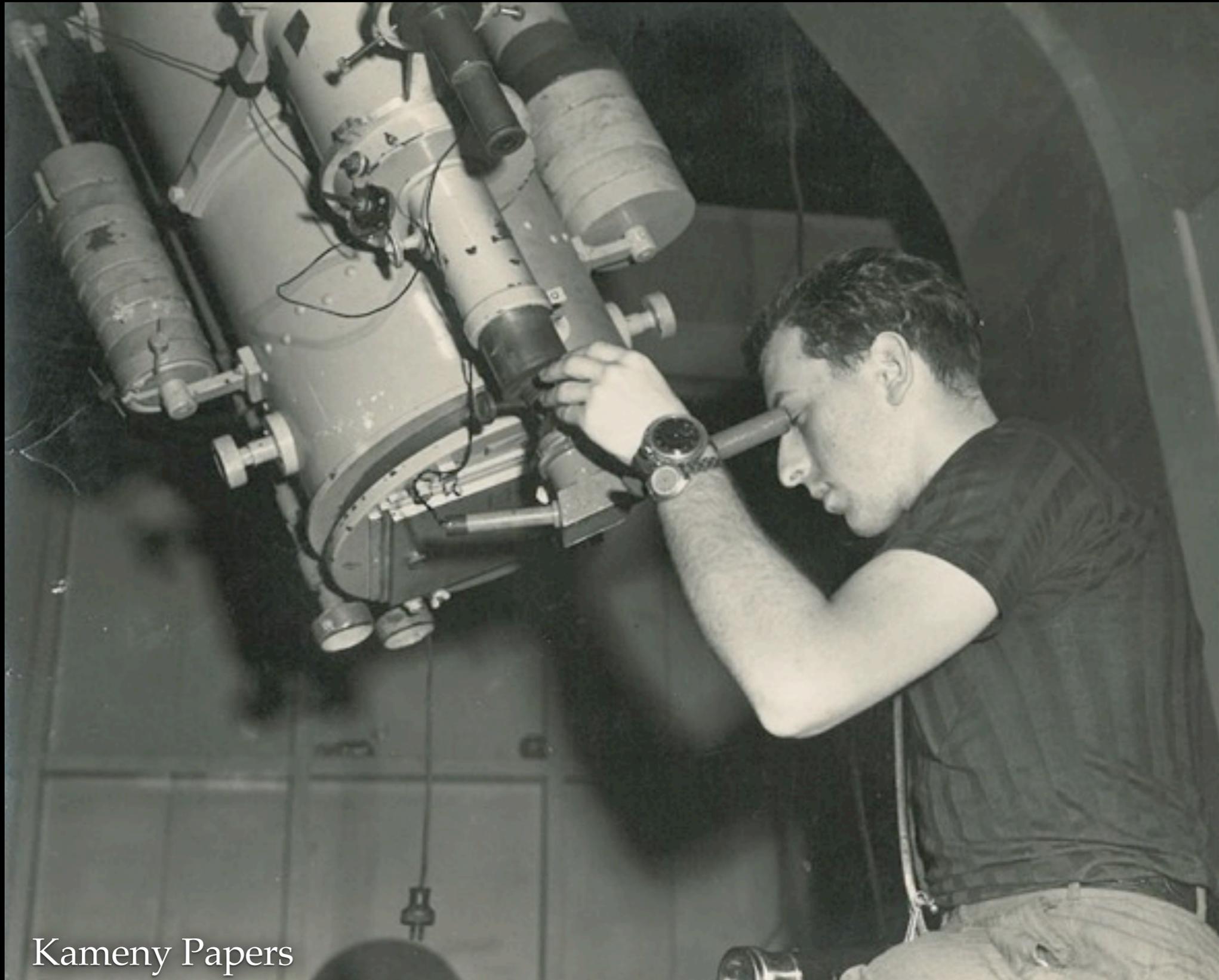


Civil rights
legend



Photo credit unknown

Frank Kameny as a Harvard astronomy PhD student, 1950s.



Kameny Papers

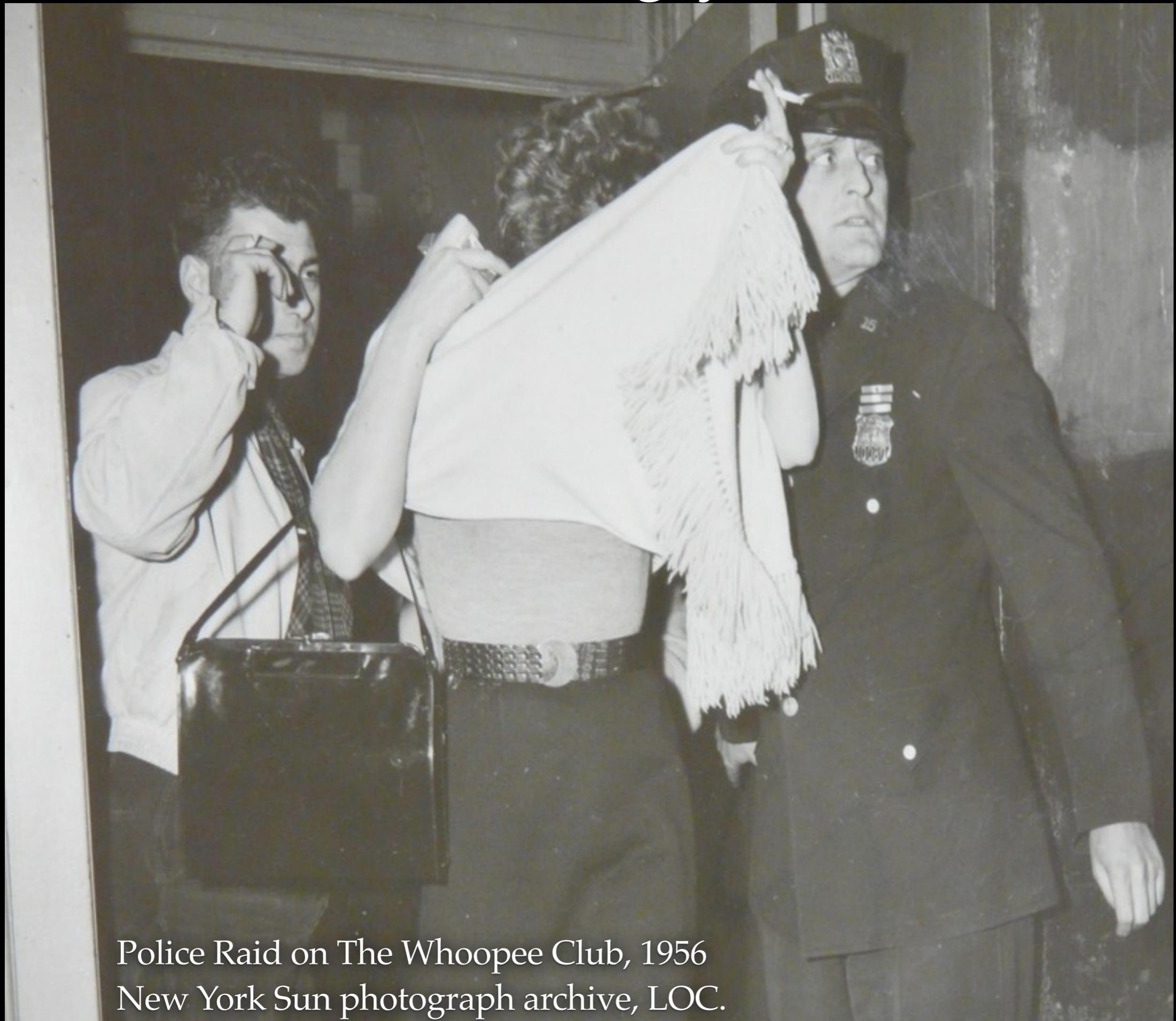
“Then, in 1957, at age 32, Frank Kameny had his ‘accident’: the fatal accident of being "found out gay" in the 1950s.”
-Charles Francis

The world for gays in 1956.



Police Raid on The Whoopee Club, 1956
New York Sun photograph archive, LOC

The world for gays in 1956.



Police Raid on The Whoopee Club, 1956
New York Sun photograph archive, LOC.

Fairfax Police Drive Nets 65 Homosexuals

Sixty-five homosexuals have been arrested at two truck turn-offs on Shirley highway since May, Fairfax County Police Chief William L. Durrer said today.

The homosexuals, mostly from the District, had been waiting at the two truck stops between Springfield and Fort Belvoir to accost truck drivers, he said.

More than 60 men have been arrested after approaching plain clothes officers of the county police vice squad, according to the chief. Almost all have forfeited \$100 bond on

Many of those arrested were business and professional men with families, the chief said: Among them were a minister, a physician, four teachers, military personnel and a real estate executive, according to the chief.

One of the teachers is from Fairfax County. He has been suspended pending the outcome of his case.

Plainclothesmen from the county vice squad have been watching the spots since May, driving to them in motor units of tractor-trailers.

Starting this week, uniformed officers of the patrol division will question suspi-



Frank in 1948. Kameny Papers, LOC

With your most recent position, list all employment and include military service as part of record. Indicate any references you do not wish us to contact immediately. (When may we contact?)

b. Name and address of Organization ARMY MAP SERVICE 6500 BROOKS LAKE, WASHINGTON 25, DC

b. Title or position ASTRONOMER

c. Period of employment: from 9/15/57 to 12/20/57 Starting salary \$6115 per YEAR

c. Leaving salary \$6115 per YEAR

d. Name, title, and last known address of supervisor MR. S.W. HENRIKSON ; 1019 W. GREENWICH ST
ASTRONOMER FALLS CHURCH, VA.

Kameny Papers, LOC

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ASTRONOMER FALLS CHURCH, VA.

a. Have you ever been fired, asked to resign, furloughed (other than regular furlough or leave) or put on an inactive status for any reason while serving with any service of the United States or in any position of private or government employment? YES If yes, state circumstances on separate sheet.

b. Have you ever been barred by any governmental or private employer from taking examinations or accepting any appointments? YES If yes, state circumstances on separate sheet.

Kameny Papers, LOC

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
1520 H STREET NORTHWEST
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

July 30, 1959

TELEPHONE: EXECUTIVE 3-3250
TWX: WA 755

Mr. Franklin E. Kameny
2435 18th Street, N.W.
Washington 12, D. C.

Dear Mr. Kameny:

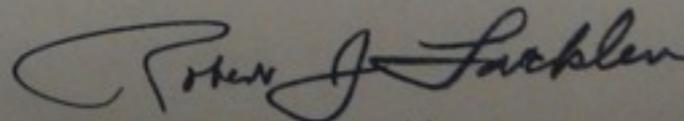
The National Aeronautics and Space Administration appreciates your interest in applying for a position. We have been accepting applications in all occupational areas of work, pending the time the NASA would become organized and the specific needs for personnel known.

The NASA was formally organized on October 1, 1958. The detailed organization structure has now progressed to the point where we know or can predict the kinds and levels of personnel we will need.

We have made a careful review and evaluation of your application for applicability to our present and anticipated needs. A careful determination has been made that there is no position in which we can utilize your particular qualifications. Therefore, your application is being returned to you.

Thank you for your interest in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Very truly yours,



Robert J. Lacklen
Director of Personnel

Kameny Papers,
LOC

2435 18th Street, NW
Washington 9, D.C.
June 1, 1959

Mr. Neil McElroy
Secretary of Defence
The Pentagon
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. McElroy:

As a citizen, I am appealing to you, as the appropriate government official, for assistance in a matter in which I feel that I am being unjustly and improperly treated by your department, to the detriment of the nation as well as of myself; a situation of which I have been able to obtain no rectification at lower levels.

Kameny Papers,
LOC

Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1960

No. 676

FRANKLIN EDWARD KAMENY, *Petitioner*

v.

WILBER M. BRUCKER, Secretary of the Army, et al.,
Respondents

**PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI
TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT**

FRANKLIN E. KAMENY

2435 18th Street, N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

Mr. Ne
Secret
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Washin

Dear M

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your d
I have

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ADMINISTRATOR
BUREAU OF SECURITY AND CONSULAR AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

November 7, 1960

Dear Dr. Kameny:

It should be perfectly apparent to you, as it was to me upon receipt of your first letter, that I am unable to make any reply that will be satisfactory to you. You are equally aware as I of the reasons why the Department of State does not hire homosexuals and will not permit their employment. I am quite prepared to agree that a substantial amount of the reason behind this policy results from the attitude of our society in general toward any behavior which it considers undesirable and which it does not accept. Homosexuality is one such behavior.

So long as this is the attitude of our society -- and you are well aware that it is, as expressed both formally in laws, regulations and ordinances, and informally in the average reaction of people toward homosexuals -- the homosexual is automatically a security risk because of the social and emotional pressures to which he is subject from society, and because of the ever present risk that such pressures can be utilized by hostile elements to coerce him into activities other than those which he would undertake of his own free will. Also because of the prevailing mores of our society, the homosexual frequently becomes a disruptive personnel factor within any organization.

The above arguments, which I am quite certain you will not agree with, deal solely with elements of homosexuality entirely outside of the control of the individual to influence. They are quite sufficient,

in my

Dr. Franklin E. Kameny,
2435 18th Street, N.W.,
Washington 9, D.C.



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ADMINISTRATOR
BUREAU OF SECURITY AND CONSULAR AFFAIRS
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Dr. Franklin E. Kameny,
2435 18th Street, N.W.,
Washington 9, D.C.

UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

ADDRESS ONLY
"CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION"
IN YOUR REPLY REFER TO
FILE
AND DATE OF THIS LETTER

JUN 22 1961

Dr. Franklin E. Kameny
2435 Eighteenth Street, N.W.
Washington 9, D. C.

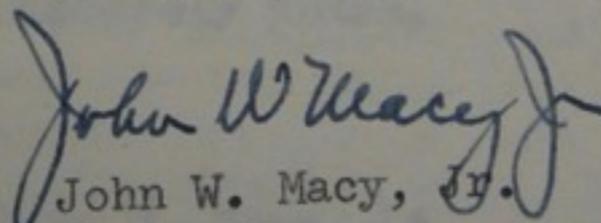
Dear Dr. Kameny:

The Civil Service Regulations include the following as a disqualification for employment in the Federal service: "Criminal, infamous, dishonest, immoral, or notoriously disgraceful conduct."

The Commission's policy, based on impartial consideration of many cases involving all aspects of human behavior, is that homosexuals or sexual perverts are not suitable for Federal employment.

On considering the representations in your letter of June 5, 1961, I find no basis for changing this policy.

Sincerely yours,


John W. Macy, Jr.
Chairman

White House Protest, 1965.



Kameny Papers



UPI, reprinted in *Becoming Visible*

“I looked at whatever [research] there was, as a scientist by training. And what I found was absolutely appalling. Slovenly, slipshod, sleazy reasoning and scientific work, moralistic and theological value judgments cloaked in the language of science but with none of the substance of science.” - F.A.K, 1998, qtd by Murdoch & Price

5020 Cathedral Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016
November 18, 1975

Dr. Robert Spitzer, Chairperson
American Psychiatric Association Task Force
on Nomenclature and Statistics
722 West 168th Street
New York City, New York 10032

202-362-2211; 202-363-3881

Dear Bob:

In your letter printed in the Psychiatric News in the October 15, 1975 issue, you state your belief that homosexuality represents "less than optimal functioning".

I challenge you to provide even a shred of scientifically-meaningful or scientifically valid support for the statement. I defy you to do so. I am convinced that neither you nor anyone else can. Your statement is a mere subjective value-juegment, with no scientific or objective merit whatever. Frankly, I even defy you to justify your belief on a totally non-scientific, subjective basis of any kind.

Now that we are no longer pathological, we are merely "non-optimal", still defined, by cultural, societal, and theological value

Kameny Papers, LOC



Photo credit unknown

GAY

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Volume 4

May 7, 1973

Number 101

PSYCHIATRIC ASS'N TO RECONSIDER SICKNESS THEORY

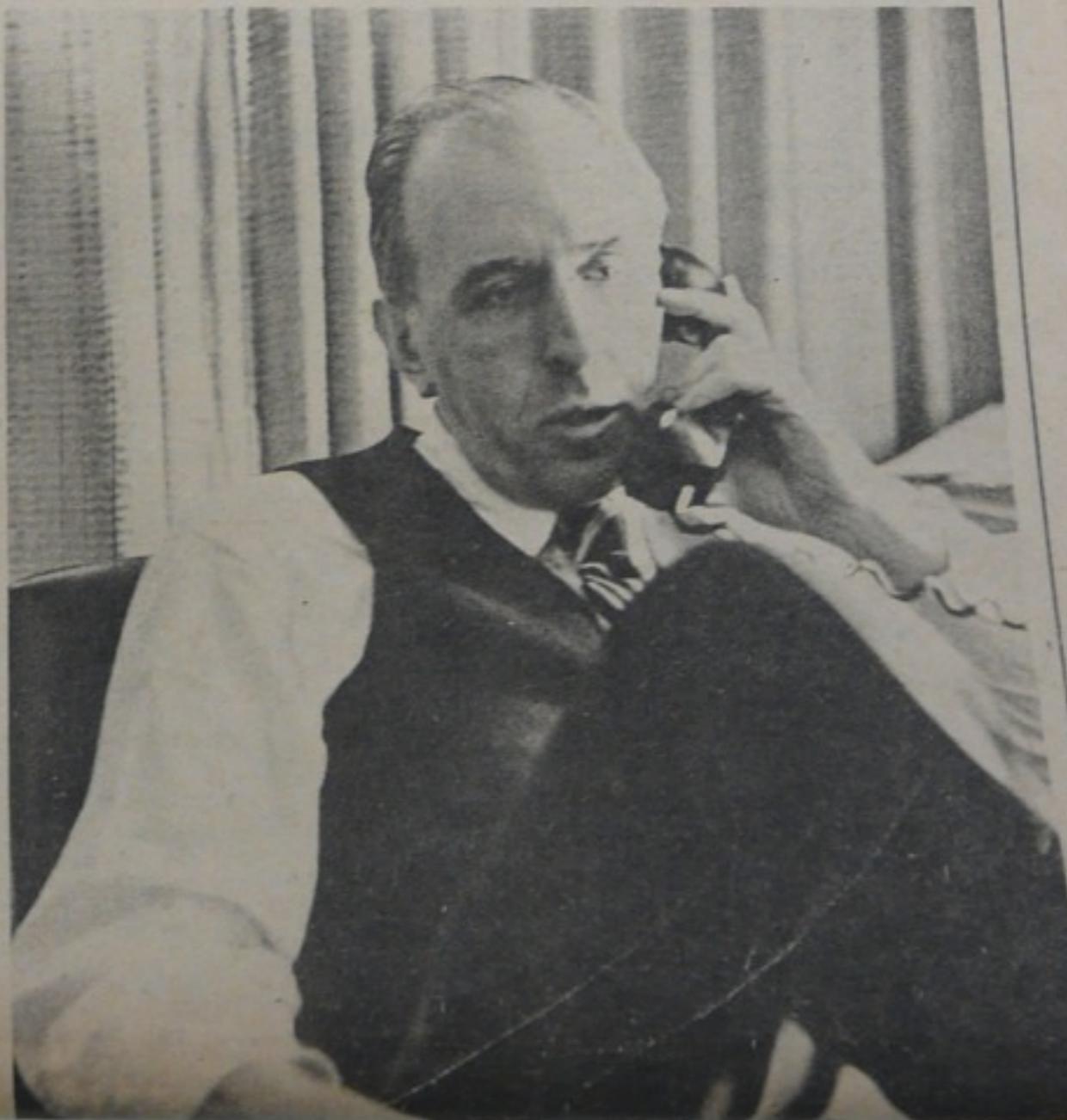
Washington, D.C. *Psychiatric News*, the official newspaper of the American Psychiatric Association, carried an article in the center of its front page (March 21, 1973) which says that a district branch of the APA is urging revised labeling for homosexuality. The article calls attention to The Northern New England Psychiatric Society by saying that this group, which represents 650 psychiatrists in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, has called for an end to legal and employment discrimination against homosexuals and of legal restrictions on sexual acts of consenting adults. The Northern New England Society has suggested that the term "sexual deviation" be replaced in the APA nomenclature by the term "sexual dysfunction." This position was taken by the society at its February meeting.

In its statement the Society recommends that sexual dysfunction rather than sexual deviation be labeled an ill-

include frigidity, impotence, and other 'non-deviate' dysfunctions as well as homosexuality if, in the opinion of the physician, this was a problem area for the patient."

In recommending an end to all legal discrimination against homosexuals, the Society says it believes there is a wide consensus within APA that "there is no proper medical basis to accord homosexuals less than full and equal protection under the laws."

Continuing, the Society says there is no evidence that homosexuals function less well in occupations than heterosexuals, and even if there were such evidence, it would be unfair "to base employment policy on class membership probabilities, overruling other factors without regard to the individual case A policy of judging job applicants on their individual merit would be most consistent with the furthering of each person's mental



Lord Wandel

GUID LEFT P...

~~TO:~~ Those who contributed to my May, 1973 trip to Honolulu to attend the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association.

FROM: Franklin E. Kameny; 5020 Cathedral Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20016
202-362-2211; 202-363-3881

SUBJECT: VICTORY !!!! We have been "cured" !

DATE: December 15, 1973

I have delayed, until now, the writing of this report and letter of thanks and appreciation, to all of those whose contributions and assistance, in one way or another, made possible my trip to Honolulu, last May, to serve as Chief Discussant for the special session on Homosexuality held by the American Psychiatric Association, and to lobby and otherwise to work for a change in their Nomenclature to remove the labels of "sick" and "sickness" (or any approximate synonyms) from Homosexuals and Homosexuality.

While there were no immediate results from that trip itself, it did overcome long-standing resistance on the part of the psychiatrists and set into motion the ponderous, extremely intricate and complex, multi-level, internal governance machinery of the American Psychiatric Association, in regard to a policy change in respect to its categorization of homosexuality as an illness. During the May meeting, we drafted and "fed into the mill" (which we set into motion there) preliminary proposals on both the deletion of Homosexuality from the APA Nomenclature (the major issue) and on an APA position on civil rights for Gays.

Following the May meeting, with some of us overseeing every step and detail, and pushing and prodding as necessary, these resolutions moved into and through the Nomenclature Committee (June), the Council on Research and Development (October), the Reference Committee (November) and the Assembly of District Branches (November), plus some of the individual District Branches. Of these, the major single hurdle was the Council. We did extensive lobbying at and before the Council's Washington meeting in mid-October, and got the resolutions passed.

Kameny papers

Federal government agencies in gay-related security clearance cases. It was put into the APA "pipeline" at the May, 1973 APA annual conference in Hawaii, following a very informal conference, at a table in a Waikiki gay bar, with APA officer Robert Spitzer, Ronald Gold, and me.

Franklin E. Kameny
Franklin E. Kameny

POSITION STATEMENT ON HOMOSEXUALITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Adopted by the APA Board of Trustees, December 15, 1973
(Unanimously with one abstention)

Whereas homosexuality per se implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capabilities, therefore, be it resolved that the American Psychiatric Association deplores all public and private discrimination against homosexuals in such areas as employment, housing, public accommodation, and licensing, and declares that no burden of proof of such judgment, capacity, or reliability shall be placed upon homosexuals greater than that imposed on any other persons. Further, the American Psychiatric Association supports and urges the enactment of civil rights legislation at the local, state, and federal level that would offer homosexual citizens the same protections now guaranteed to others on the basis of race, creed, color, etc. Further, the American Psychiatric Association supports and urges the repeal of all discriminatory legislation singling out homosexual acts by consenting adults in private.

(The American Psychiatric Association is, of course, aware that many other persons in addition to homosexuals are irrationally denied their civil rights on the basis of pejorative connotations derived from diagnostic or descriptive terminology used in psychiatry and deplores all such discrimination. This resolution singles out discrimination against homosexuals only because of the pervasive discriminatory acts directed against this group and the arbitrary and discriminatory laws directed against homosexual behavior.)

When government employment policy evolved:

- End of ban on gays in civil service, 1975.
- End of ban on security clearances (executive order), 1995.
- Nondiscrimination in civil service (executive order), 1998.
- Official apology by OPM to Kameny, 2009.
- End of ban on military service (DADT), 2010.

OPM apologizes to Kameny, 2009



OPM



2009: The President signing an executive order opening some fringe benefits (not health insurance) to partners of federal workers.

Repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”, 2010



Monday, March 12, 2012

Repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”, 2010



Monday, March 12, 2012

Repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”, 2010



Frank Kameny



SLDN's Tom Carpenter and
NASA's Charlie Bolden

“I can’t tell you how proud I am of you and how happy I am to see this nightmare end.” - Charlie Bolden



Memorial at the US Capitol



The Advocate- Robert Dodge



Washington Blade | Michael Ke



**“It was because of that man that I have a career.”
- OPM Director Berry**



FRANKLIN E
KAMENY
PFC
US ARMY
WORLD WAR II
MAY 21 1925
OCT 11 2011
GERMANY

ZEIGLER
EMANUEL MOUNTZ JR.
"BUTCH"
APR. 18, 1951
DEC. 22, 2009
A PROUD GAY TEACHER
AND BUSINESSMAN

"GAY IS GOOD"

Washington Blade

THE
American Astronomical Society



in light of its commitment to diversity and equality,
hereby honors the memory of the astronomer

Dr. Franklin Edward Kameny

For his exemplary lifelong commitment to promoting equal rights for homosexual men and women. Dr. Kameny's activism removed discriminatory barriers that had cut short many careers. Dr. Kameny tirelessly advocated against policies that banned gays from working for the federal government, holding security clearances, or serving openly in the military.

Presented January 2012, Austin, Texas


Debra M. Simégreen
President


Kevin Marvel
Executive Officer

Posthumous prize for Kameny, American Astronomical Society, 2012





Main Menu

- ▶ About AAS
- ▶ Career Services
- Committees
- ▶ Contact AAS
- ▶ Divisions
- ▶ Education Services
- ▶ Governance and Council
- ▶ Grants/Prizes
- Journals
- ▶ Meeting Services
- ▶ Membership Services
- ▶ Public Policy
- Press Services
- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Legal & Policy Information

Home

Working Group on Gay and Lesbian Equality

Submitted by Jerry.Lin on Wed, 02/08/2012 - 13:16

Website: <http://wgle.aas.org>

History: Established January 8, 2012

Members: Members of the working group are drawn from the community and invited to participate.

Term: The working group is governed by a 5-member executive committee. The chair is elected by the executive committee.

Charge: The Working Group on LGBTIQ Equality (WGLE) is tasked with promoting and questioning (LGBTIQ) individuals within our profession. To that end, WGLE

- end hiring and workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation;
- eliminate the inequalities in compensation experienced by LGBTIQ individuals;
- create a professional climate that respects and values diversity;

FIRST CLASS
CITIZENSHIP
FOR
HOMOSEXUALS



Frank's vision is
not yet reality.

A photograph of an elderly man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, a blue shirt, and a striped tie. He is holding a large white sign on a wooden stand. The sign has the text "FIRST CLASS CITIZENSHIP FOR HOMOSEXUALS" written on it in black, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The background is a dark, textured wall.

FIRST CLASS
CITIZENSHIP
FOR
HOMOSEXUALS

(At the Smithsonian.)

Frank's vision is
not yet reality.

But we've come a long way.



Frank's vision is
not yet reality.

(At the Smithsonian.)



But we've come a long way.