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March 8, 2004, Monday

EDITORIAL DESK

Gay Marriage: A Variety of Lenses

(Letter) 203 words

To the Editor:

The mayor of New Paltz, N.Y., is being charged with solemnizing a marriage without the issuance of a marriage license ("Despite Charges, Mayor Pledges to Keep Marrying Gay Couples," news article, March 4). As a rabbi, I have officiated at dozens of same sex-marriages in New York City.

When I officiate at a marriage of heterosexuals, as an agent of the state, I sign the civil marriage license as well as conduct a religious ceremony. For same-sex couples, I officiate at the religious ceremony but without a license.

On March 28, I will again solemnize a marriage without the issuance of a marriage license; will I be charged as well? Many of my clergy colleagues have done and continue to do the same. If Mayor Jason West is to be charged and prosecuted, then prosecute all of us who are doing the same.

(Rabbi) SHARON KLEINBAUM

New York, March 4, 2004

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