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to do that job and who has traditionally had the legal authority to do it (in the case of education, this would be the states). This is essentially an argument that a good dose of dual federalism is not necessarily a bad thing. The second big reform that Rivlin endorses is a fundamental rethinking of how government funds itself. She argues that the existing federal tax system is poorly suited for the 21st century and suggests the implementation of a kind of national sales tax, collected by the federal government but distributed to the states. This would allow states to recapture sales taxes lost to Internet sales as well as provide a more uniform and reliable revenue source for more distinct and defined policy responsibilities.

- **Robertson, David Brian.** *Federalism and the Making of America*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

The two articles described above are analyses of changes in intergovernmental relations more or less as they occur in real time. Robertson's book makes a good companion to these, placing such time-focused studies into perspective by offering a sweeping story of the historical development of federalism in America, from its birth at the founding of the Republic to the red-state–blue-state conflicts of the 21st century. The book is

notable for its focus on federalism as the stage on which most of the great policy battles in American history have been fought. Racial relations, economic regulation, social welfare and regulation—all these issues and more have been critically shaped by America's system of intergovernmental relations.

- **Weissert, Carol S.** "Beyond Marble Cakes and Picket Fences: What U.S. Federalism Scholars Can Learn From Comparative Work." *Journal of Politics* 73 (2011): 965–979.

This article is Weissert's presidential address to the Southern Political Science Association, one of the more prestigious professional associations in the discipline. In it Weissert examines an issue critical to readers of this textbook: the comparative method. She argues that while there is no doubt that state scholars put the comparative method to good use, they have a particular blind spot—they fail to learn from scholars of other federal systems that employ the same method. If we want to learn what differences really make a difference—not just in the United States but anywhere at any time—we need to pay attention to differences that make a difference in other federal systems, not just federalism in the United States.