**For Discussion**

1. Currently, thirty-two states and the District of Columbia license and recognize same-sex marriage. Some states, however, still have constitutional amendments or statutory laws that limit marriage to a union between a man and a woman. What role should the federal government play in dealing with such morality issues as same-sex marriage? Should these issues be left entirely up to the states, or should the federal government impose strict requirements to avoid confusion and complexity?

2. Is it possible to prevent inequality in policy and services under federalism? For instance, the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 shifted policy responsibility to the states in terms of moving individuals from welfare to work. Are some states better equipped to move individuals from welfare to work than others?

3. Homeland security remains an important policy priority for the states and the federal government, but provisions relating to it remain largely unfunded. Given that state and local emergency personnel are the first responders to any attack or natural disaster, what are the effects of homeland security remaining a largely unfunded mandate in terms of federal–state relations?

4. Did the U.S. Supreme Court overstep its bounds in its ruling in *Bush v. Gore* (2000)? Should this have remained a state issue with the Florida State Supreme Court holding final authority?

5. What is the future of federalism? What are some potential problems of ad hoc federalism? When each era of federalism is evaluated, is it possible to identify advantages and disadvantages to each?

6. Some believe that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act had a centralizing effect, resulting in a more powerful federal government. What reasons might they offer to support their belief? Are there reasons to believe otherwise? What are they?