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Introduction

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Introduction

Welcome to Volume 13 of *Major Themes in Economics*. All papers in *Major Themes* are written by senior economics majors at the University of Northern Iowa. Complete funding for this edition was provided by a generous contribution from Ron Rolighed, '89, a past author whose article appeared in 1989.

Kristi Philips looks at economic growth in Latin America from 1995 to 2009. She uses regression analysis to find the factors that are correlated with growth. Among other things, she finds that low levels of corruption and good infrastructure are associated with higher growth.

The ongoing debt crisis in Greece, Portugal, and Ireland has put great stress on the European Monetary Union. **Tom Augspurger** explains how current account imbalances in the Eurozone contributed to this problem, and how a solution to the problem is made more difficult by the monetary union itself.

Some students pursue advanced education in an MBA program or in law school. It is often assumed that such education will guarantee high future income and stable employment. The next two papers in this volume take a look at this assumption.

Matt Peterson uses two-stage least squares regression analysis to look at the factors that influence starting salaries for new graduates of MBA programs. He discovers that the program's rank has a big influence on salary.

Trevor Boeckmann looks at job prospects for law-school graduates. He discovers that law schools provide deceptive information about employment prospects. The evidence suggests that graduates from lower-ranked programs may have a difficult time finding suitable employment.

Can a city's design affect the obesity rate? **Charlie Cowell** says that it can. He uses regression analysis and finds evidence that more recreation facilities and greater population density may lead to lower obesity rates in U.S. cities.

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