JILL ANN COYLE. “David Lee’s *The Porcine Canticles*: Creating a New American Mythology” (Under the direction of Professor Jon Thompson.)

In *The Porcine Canticles*, David Lee creates a new American mythology that resonates with modern ideology while remaining firmly rooted in the traditional American values of frontier individualism, agrarianism, and redemption. His poetic “pastiche” style combines allusions to the European literary tradition with an American vernacular tradition to create a unique hybrid style that mingles ancient European roots with New World ideologies, thereby invigorating an inherited poetic tradition. Lee’s poetic tale of a hog farmer in present-day rural Utah explores the contemporary anxiety created by a disconnect from place, community, and nature. Lee characterizes the poet-farmer’s work—both his physical labor on the land and the mental and emotional work of writing—as redemptive. Throughout the collection, the poet-farmer uses both physical and poetic “work” to transform “space” into “place” by engaging with the land and community around him and by weaving stories about this engagement. Through this “work,” both literary and physical, David Lee creates an American mythology that defines man’s role in the world through a renewed relationship with “place.”