Introduction

In "Forest & Garden: Traces of Wildness in a Modernizing Land, 1897-1949", Melanie Louise Simo explores the period between 1897 and 1949, a time of significant transformation in the United States. During this time, the landscape architecture of the country underwent a modernization that reflected broader social and cultural changes. Simo examines how the ideas and practices of landscape design evolved in response to these changes.

The book covers the establishment of the National Park Service and the impact of World War II on the development of parks and gardens. Simo also discusses the role of prominent landscape architects of the time, such as Frederick Law Olmsted and his son, John Olmsted.

Simo argues that the modernization of landscape architecture was not just about creating new spaces but also about changing the way people related to the natural world. The book covers the rise of the garden movement and the influence it had on the design of public and private gardens.

Overall, "Forest & Garden: Traces of Wildness in a Modernizing Land, 1897-1949" offers a comprehensive look at the landscape architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and its significance in shaping modern American culture.