

# France under Fire: German Invasion, Civilian Flight and Family Survival during World War II (Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare)

Dr Nicole Dombrowski Risser



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France under Fire: German Invasion, Civilian Flight and Family Survival during World War II (Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare) Dr Nicole Dombrowski Risser 'We request an immediate favour of you, to build a shelter for us women and small children, because we have absolutely no place to take refuge and we are terrified!' This French mother's petition sent to her mayor on the eve of Germany's 1940 invasion of France reveals civilians' security concerns unleashed by Second World War Blitzkrieg fighting tactics. Unprepared for air warfare's assault on civilian psyches, French planners were among the first in history to respond to civilian security challenges posed by aerial bombardment. France Under Fire offers a social, political and military examination of the origins of the French refugee crisis of 1940, a mass displacement of eight million civilians fleeing German combatants. Scattered throughout a divided France, refugees turned to German Occupation officials and Vichy administrators for relief and repatriation. Their solutions raised questions about occupying powers' obligations to civilians and elicited new definitions of refugees' rights.



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