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modernity past and present.

Sommario/riassunto

The development of modern military conscription systems is usually seen as a response to countries' security needs, and as reflection of national political ideologies like civic republicanism or democratic egalitarianism. This study of conscription politics in France and the United States in the first half of the twentieth century challenges such common sense interpretations. Instead, it shows how despite institutional and ideological differences, both countries implemented conscription systems shaped by political and military leaders' concerns about how taking ordinary family men for military service would affect men's presumed positions as heads of families, especially as breadwinners and figures of paternal authority. The first of its kind, this carefully researched book combines an ambitious range of scholarly traditions and offers an original comparison of how protection of men's household authority affected one of the paradigmatic institutions of modern states.
