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Autore	Knowles Norman James <1963->
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Sommario/riassunto	The Loyalists have often been credited with planting a coherent and

unified tradition that has been passed on virtually unchanged to subsequent generations and that continues to define Ontario's political culture. Challenging past scholarship, Norman Knowles argues that there never has been consensus on the defining characteristics of the Loyalist tradition. He suggests that, in fact, the very concept of tradition has constantly been subject to appropriation by various constituencies who wish to legitimize their point of view and their claim to status by creating a usable past. The picture of the Loyalist tradition that emerges from this study is not of an inherited artefact but of a contested and dynamic phenomenon that has undergone continuous change. *Inventing the Loyalists* traces the evolution of the Loyalist tradition from the Loyalists' arrival in Upper Canada in 1784 until the present. It explores how the Loyalist tradition was produced, established, and maintained, delineates the roles particular social groups and localities played in constructing differing versions of the Loyalist past, and examines the reception of these efforts by the larger community. Rejecting both consensual and hegemonic models, Knowles presents a pluralistic understanding of the invention of tradition as a complex process of social and cultural negotiation by which different groups, interests, and generations compete with each other over the content, meaning, and uses of the past. He demonstrates that in Ontario, many groups, including filio-pietistic descendants, political propagandists, status-conscious professionals, reform-minded women, and Native peoples, invested in the creation of the Loyalist tradition. By exploring the ways in which the Loyalist past was, and still is, being negotiated, *Inventing the Loyalists* revises our understanding of the Loyalist tradition and provides insight into the politics of commemoration.
