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	Autore	Rochlin Gene I
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	Sommario/riassunto	Voice mail. E-mail. Bar codes. Desktops. Laptops. Networks. The Web. In this exciting book, Gene Rochlin takes a closer look at how these familiar and pervasive productions of computerization have become embedded in all our lives, forcing us to narrow the scope of our choices, our modes of control, and our experiences with the real world. Drawing on fascinating narratives from fields that range from military command, air traffic control, and international fund transfers to library cataloging and supermarket checkouts, Rochlin shows that we are rapidly making irreversible and at times harmful changes in our

business, social, and personal lives to comply with the formalities and restrictions of information systems. The threat is not the direct one once framed by the idea of insane robots or runaway mainframes usurping human functions for their own purposes, but the gradual loss of control over hardware, software, and function through networks of interconnection and dependence. What Rochlin calls the computer trap has four parts: the lure, the snare, the costs, and the long-term consequences. The lure is obvious: the promise of ever more powerful and adaptable tools with simpler and more human-centered interfaces. The snare is what usually ensues. Once heavily invested in the use of computers to perform central tasks, organizations and individuals alike are committed to new capacities and potentials, whether they eventually find them rewarding or not. The varied costs include a dependency on the manufacturers of hardware and software--and a seemingly pathological scramble to keep up with an incredible rate of sometimes unnecessary technological change. Finally, a lack of redundancy and an incredible speed of response make human intervention or control difficult at best when (and not if) something goes wrong. As Rochlin points out, this is particularly true for those systems whose interconnections and mechanisms are so deeply concealed in the computers that no human being fully understands them.