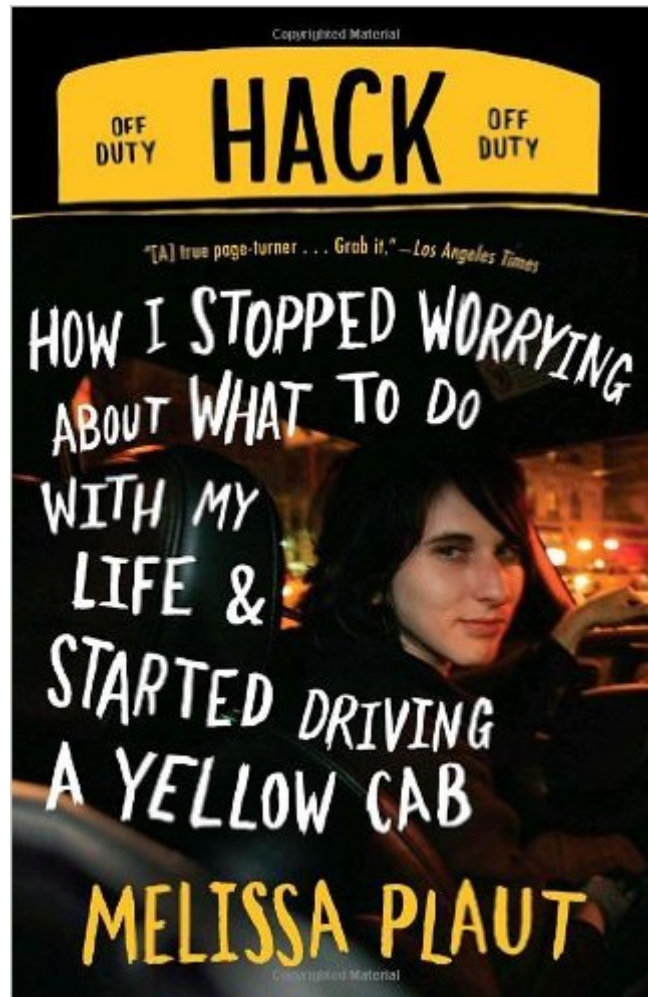


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# Hack: How I Stopped Worrying About What To Do With My Life And Started Driving A Yellow Cab



## Synopsis

She had always thought about driving a cab, just thought it would be interesting and different, a good way to make money. But it always seemed like a fleeting whim, a funny idea, something I would never actually do. In her late twenties and after a series of unsatisfying office jobs, Melissa Plaut decided she was going to stop worrying about what to do with the rest of her life and focus on what she was going to do next. Her first adventure: becoming a taxi driver. Undeterred by the fact that 99 percent of cabbies in the city were men, she went to taxi school, got her hack license, and hit the streets of Manhattan and the outlying boroughs. Hack traces Plaut's first two years behind the wheel of a yellow cab traveling the 6,400 miles of New York City streets. She shares the highs, the lows, the shortcuts, and professional trade secrets. Between figuring out where and when to take a bathroom break and trying to avoid run-ins with the NYPD, Plaut became an honorary member of a diverse brotherhood that included Harvey, the cross-dressing cabbie; the dispatcher affectionately called "Paul the crazy Romanian"; and Lenny, the garage owner rumored to be the real-life prototype for TV's Louie De Palma of Taxi. With wicked wit and arresting insight, Melissa Plaut reveals the crazy parade of humanity that passed through her cab—including struggling actors, federal judges, bartenders, strippers, and drug dealers—while showing how this grueling work provided her with empowerment and a greater sense of self. Hack introduces an irresistible new voice that is much like New York itself—vivid, profane, lyrical, and ineffably hip.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This memoir about a female cab driver is good. I enjoyed the down to earth writing by the author but I often felt as though I was searching for the thread of continuity. Melissa would start telling an entertaining story then abruptly end it to go on to another story months later. I also could never quite get a handle on whether she was actually bragging or complaining about the job she was holding down. This is actually an entertaining read and I would say buy it. You will learn a few things you did not know - as well as get paranoid about tipping from now on.

I was reading Melissa's blog for a while before her book came out. The book alone is a good, fast read, chockful of great stories and insight. To further expand your experience from Melissa's viewpoint, read her blog as well. It adds an edge to the stories as a bonus not available with regular books not accompanied by blogs. I'm a native NYer and know the city well, and Melissa tells it like it is. I've also been wanting to drive a taxi for a few years but never had the guts to do it, until now thanks to Melissa (final test is today). What fun! Melissa's experiences are honest and real. Way to go!

For the public the cab driver is just someone who is never there when you want them and blocking the traffic when you don't. You sit in your cab and you are an observer on life. No one would ever believe what people tell to or say to a cabby. The book is an admission of defeat but I feel she had a personal victory in her sights. Through it all the high points and the lows she was learning about mankind and humanity. A valuable lesson which she shared with you. I started my own blog after reading hers [...] I wish her well in her new career, the lessons learned while driving a taxi help her and you dear readers in the future. Well done! success in your next career.

LOVE this book - could not put it down. Melissa Plaut is one of my all time heroes! Just hope she knows how she has elevated the respect I have for cab drivers and humanity in general. Breath of fresh air.

Never read Melissa's blog, but the book reads very journal like. I was flirting with the idea of being a cab driver for a spell during the recession and this book gave me some insight into that world.

Melissa Plaut's disjointed but riveting style of writing takes you by her side, in the moment, through her life on this job. I feel like I've learned so much about Melissa and about taxi driving in NYC. It's alternately adventuresome, sad, frustrating, anger-inducing and definitely eye-opening. I wish the

book were longer and I hope she'll write a follow up. [...].

This gives a new perspective on the life and experiences of the New York cab driver. Very interesting and fun to read. Ms. Plaut tells you what really goes on in the cabbies world

In every city I've been, be it NY, Tampa, Chicago, or London, the cab drivers are always racist. After reading this book about a (NON-RACIST) cabbie, I've figured out why; cab drivers see everyone at their very worst. When we get in a cab, we're in a hurry, no patience, no tolerance for anything. If it's during rush hour, the other drivers are equally impatient. Hairdressers, on the other hand, and perhaps the waiters in upscale restaurants, are usually happier. They see everyone at their best; breath smells fresh, clothes are clean, customers are happy to be there. The waitresses in roadside diners probably have an outlook more like that of a cabdriver; the customers are yelling "c'mon, where's my food I'm in a hurry!" Plaut wasn't slumming, I just want you to know. She needed a well-paid job, and was bored with the office. Driving a cab is work, plain and simple. Perhaps it's not the right job for educated people, but then where else do you want her to work? HACK was written years ago, but since then the economy has crashed. Former stockbrokers are now working in Starbucks. Teachers are delivering pizza. I bet we'll see more books like this in the next few years.

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