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[Review of] Rap Whoz Who: The World of Rap Music

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Stancell, Steven. **Rap whoz who: the world of rap music**. Schirmer Books/Prentice Hall International, 1996. 339p index afp ISBN 0028645200 pbk, \$22.95

Stancell (*New York Beacon* "Rapper's Delight" columnist) offers an overview of nearly 300 artists, producers, and record labels, focusing on popular purveyors but also covering the pioneers, innovators, and mix-tape DJ's (covering the mid-1970s to the present). Each entry (arranged alphabetically by the artist's stage name) includes real name and birth/death dates (when available), a one-sentence (for lesser-known artists) to five-page entry (e.g., Afrika Bambaataa), photos of major artists, and selected singles and albums or CDs (with title, year, label, and date). Sections for most letters end with one- to two-page essays (e.g., "Rap & Violence," "A Basic Rap Album Collection") as well as glossary entries for 50 or so rap terms (useful, but not nearly so far-ranging as Lois Stavsky, I.E. Mozeson, and D.R. Mozeson's *A Z Z: The Book of Rap & Hip Hop Slang*, 1995). Coverage is good, including some British entries, with the Beastie Boys and even Vanilla Ice alongside Arrested Development, Ice-T, and Dr. Dre, but significant current innovators are not included (e.g., Tricky, Massive Attack, Prodigy, Chemical Brothers, and the area of trip hop). The entry "Rappin' on the Net" includes five Web URLs that are incorrect or no longer available. This guide fills an important niche in popular music reference, with only *Guinness Who's Who of Rap, Dance & Techno* (1994) (unavailable for this review) focusing on this influential area.

--R. A. Aken, *University of Kentucky*

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