## Katy Perry - One of the boys (2008)

*01 One Of The Boys 02 I Kissed A Girl 03 Waking Up In Vegas 04 Thinking Of You 05 Mannequin 06 Hot N Cold 07 If You Can Afford Me 08 Lost 09 Self Inflicted 10 I'm Still Breathing 11 Fingerprints 12 Simple (bonus Track) 13 Use Your Love (bonus Track)*

So Katy Perry kissed a girl – we all know that, but what else has this feisty Californian singer – who cites Queen as her biggest influence – got to offer? Well, quite a lot as it turns out. It's certainly believable that she's singing about her own experiences with lyrics about reading teen magazines, shaving her legs and boys, and she manages to convey her emotions with a pretty varied and impressive vocal range. She's got a sound that's kind of Cerys Matthews crossed with Avril Lavigne, but there's a modern, reborn-Britney-esque tinge, which keeps One Of The Boys sounding fresh and funky.

There's a coherence to this record, but the songs have a diversity (aside from the general theme of love – for both boys and girls) which keeps things interesting. Thinking Of You is a four-minute plus ballad which laments the end of a relationship and it seems that Katy's true voice shines through here. On some tracks, it feels like she's doing songs 'in the style of', but on this song you can hear an edge and a rawness that makes you feel like you're finally listening to the real Katy. Mannequin and Lost have a similar vibe, and you can believe her constant assertions that she's a strong person and refuses to let herself be walked over. The opening lyric of Ur So Gay – "I hope you hang yourself with your H&M scarf" is slightly violent perhaps, but you get the feeling that Ms Perry has been wronged a few times and isn't going to let it go.

In general, this record is surprising – and in a good way. I'm Still Breathing is a refreshing break from the manic pop rock and shows off her versatility – she has a wide variety of sounds and it'll be interesting to see where she goes with the follow-up. I Kissed A Girl is definitely the catchiest song on the album, and it's not certain that second single, Hot N Cold will garner the same

interest. The early 90s club vibe doesn't necessarily make it the most single-worthy song. A better choice would have been Self Inflicted, but Katy obviously knows best, and, as she says in final track Fingerprints, she's, "not going down without a fight". We'll see. ---Lizzie Ennever, bbc.co.uk

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