

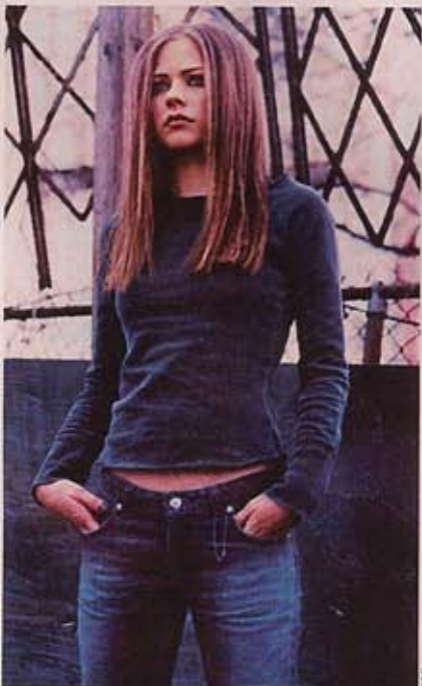
Let Go

Avril Lavigne (Arista)

Reviewed by Sona Charaipotra

Thanks to her catchy guitar-driven single "Complicated," Lavigne, 17, is poised to be the next teen-pop princess. But unlike her more mature counterparts Michelle Branch and Vanessa Carlton, she's not in a big hurry to ditch adolescence. Lavigne laces this fun debut with charming punk attitude on youthful cuts like "Sk8er Boi," about not judging a boy by his clothes.

While Lavigne may be young, she's not that innocent. One moment she's coyly sexy, the next she's irreparably wounded. With a malleable alto that slips effortlessly from hushed whisper to angst-ridden roar, she shows an impressive range. Though she has room to grow as a lyricist ("I'm not the milk and Cheerios in your spoon," she raps on one tune), Lavigne displays an emotional grace beyond her years on the string-drenched ballad "I'm with You." **Bottom Line: Don't let this one go**



She's sexy and 17: On her debut, singer Avril Lavigne raises the bar on teen pop.