



Current Popular Music: A Content Analysis

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Funding Disclosures

- National Cancer Institute (K07-CA114315)
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
(Physician Faculty Scholar Award)
- Maurice Falk Foundation

Acknowledgments

- Michael J. Fine, MD, MSc
- Madeline A. Dalton, PhD
- Tom Radomski, BS
- Aaron Agarwal, BS
- Mary Carroll
- Supria Batra

The New Entertainment



- Adolescents listen to music an average of 2.4 hours per day
- 98% adolescents have CD/MP3 in house
- 86% have CD/MP3 in their bedroom
- Figures have increased substantially even in the last decade

Rideout, 2005

Music and Identity Formation

- Adolescents link music to identity (Arnett, 1995; Diamond, 2006)
- Music deeply embedded in the lives of adolescents (Christenson & Roberts, 1998)
- Adolescents link their own drug use to musicians' (Mark, 1986)



Previous Content Analyses ('96-'97)

- 1000 popular songs
 - 18% referenced illicit drugs
 - 17% referenced alcohol
 - 3% tobacco
- 258 popular music videos
 - 20% verbally referenced illicit drugs
 - 37% displayed alcohol
 - 5% displayed tobacco
- Marijuana the most frequent illicit drug represented

Holes in Literature

- Content analysis in peer-reviewed medical literature
- Recent songs/artists
- Comprehensive, theory-based
 - Motivations
 - Associations
 - Consequences

Purpose

- Perform a comprehensive content analysis of contemporary popular music
- Focus on elements related to substances of abuse
- Include motivations, associations, and consequences associated with behaviors
- Compare across song characteristics, particularly genre

METHODS

Song Selection

- Most popular songs of 2005 according to Billboard
- Proprietary algorithm
 - Integrates data from sales and airplay (exposure)
 - Compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from 90% of the U.S. music market
 - Includes sales from music stores, direct-to-consumer transactions, and Internet sales and downloads
 - Airplay data from Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems

Song Sample

- 465 non-unique songs represent universe of songs with greatest exposure
- 279 unique songs evenly represented genres
 - Country (N=61)
 - Pop (N=35)
 - R&B/hip-hop (N=55)
 - Rap (N=62)
 - Rock (N=66)

Coding Protocol

- 2 initial coders each analyzed all 279 songs
- Computation of percent agreement (all > 75%) and Cohen's kappa scores (all > 0.50)
- 2 “confirmatory coders” analyzed all codes on which initial coders disagreed (blind to original codes)
- Consensus easily achieved

Substance Use Codes

- Use
- Figurative
- Place
- Wallpaper
- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Other (heroin/opiates, hallucinogens, inhalants, prescription drugs, OTC)
- Non-Specific

Use

“Nigga I can see the **coke** in your nose /
Cook, **coke**, **crack**, niggaz fiend for that /
It's guaranteed you gonna die /
You might get missed /
For maybe 2 or 3 hours 'til they **light their
spliffs** /
And that **coke** will get you a long time /
But when I let 'em know the **dope** is out /
It's like America Online”

Figurative Only

“Back at it, this cat is the wit and the charm /
Taking you higher, **like a syringe hittin' ya
arm**”

Non-specific (3), Opiate (1), Marijuana (2)

“I got the **product** /

Narcotics for the customers homie /

Fiends open they be **smoking like a
muffler** homie /

I get cake from selling **buds** or **haze** ...

I'm on the grind”

Motivations for Use (0/1)

- Peer/social pressure
- Sex
- Mood management
- Financial
- Addiction/craving

Motivation: Mood Management

“Billy’s at the bar, he’s been there all night /

**First ten beers he’s had, since her
goodbye /**

She left him broke, in his new truck /

He don’t smoke, but he lights one up /

Temporary fix, for his headache /

He’s hurting bad, but he’s feeling great”

Associations with Use (0/1)

- Violence
- Sex
- Humor
- Partying
- Dealing/trafficking
- Specific brand
- Operation of a vehicle
- Anti-Use Message
- Refusal to use
- Limit setting

Alcohol associated with violence

“What the hell I **had one more shot** /
Then I winked at a boy at the end of the bar /
Guess I mighta musta gone a little too far /
Cause a big ole girl walked outta the blue /
10 foot 2 with a bad attitude /
Stepped right up and **knocked out my
tooth**”

Alcohol and marijuana use associated with sex

“Buck pass the **blunt** /
These G-Unit girls just wanna have fun /
Coke and **rum** /
Got **weed** on the ton /
I'm bangin with my hand up her dress like,
unh /
I'll make her cum /
Purple haze in my lungs”

Marijuana associated with operating a vehicle

“Sit you on some **leather seats** while
blowing green /
And switching lanes”

Consequences of Use (-1/0/+1)

- Mental
- Emotional
- Physical
- Social
- Legal
- Financial
- Sexual

Positive sexual consequences

“Ain’t it just like one of us to pick up the phone and call after a **couple of drinks** /

And somewhere in the conversation, and old **familiar invitation** always arrives /

And I may hate myself in the morning, but **I’m gonna love you tonight**”

Negative physical consequences

“Friday is when you left me /
So I **drank myself to sleep** /
And Sunday I never woke up”

Negative legal consequences

“First they give us the work /

Then they throw us **in jail** (Ayy) /

... Please Lord don't let me go to **jail** tonight /

...Them alphabet boards got us **under surveillance** /

They lock us in **cages** /

The same nigga that's a star when you put 'em on stages /

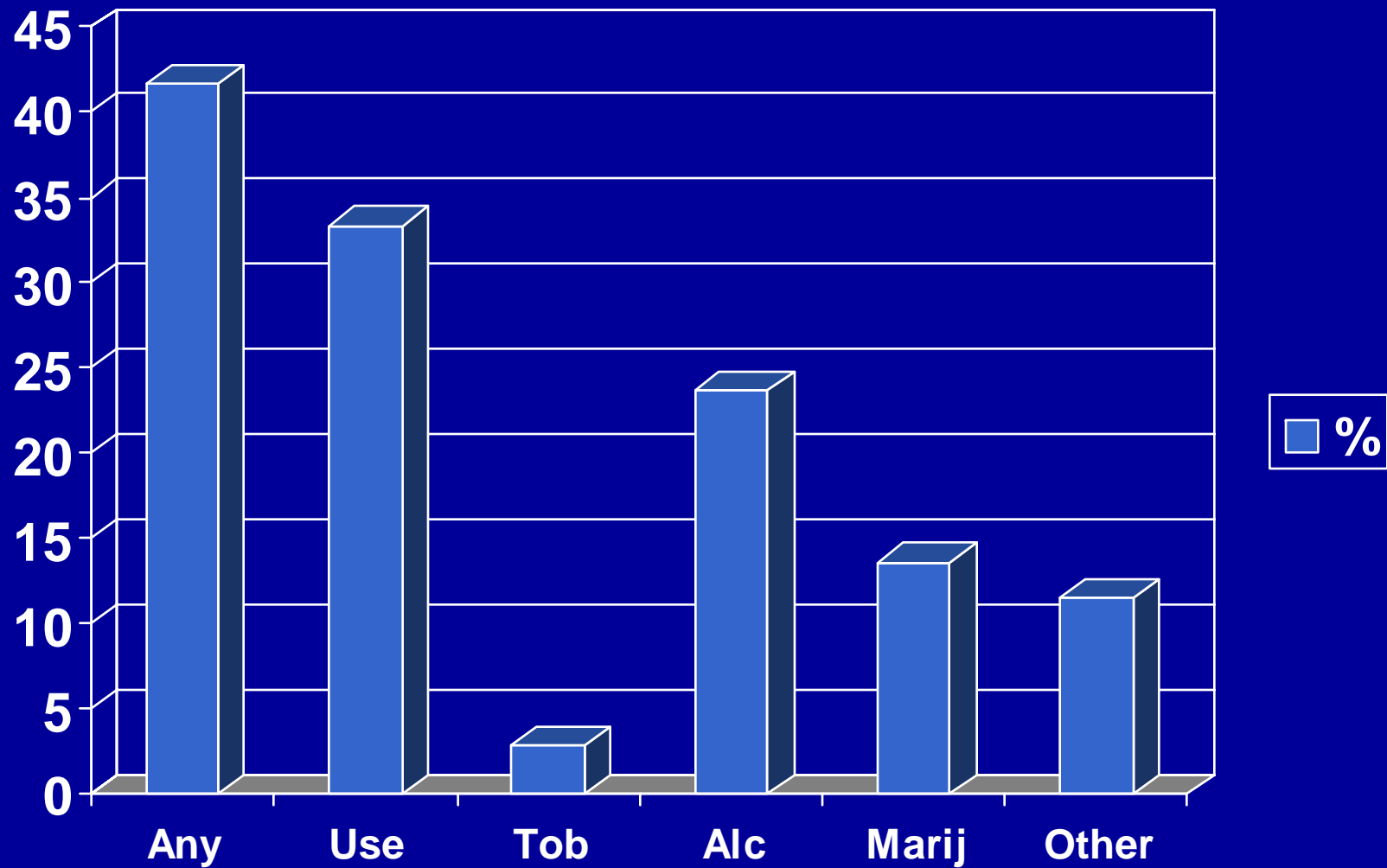
...Cause if you lookin' for me you can find me on the block disobeyin' the law”

Analysis

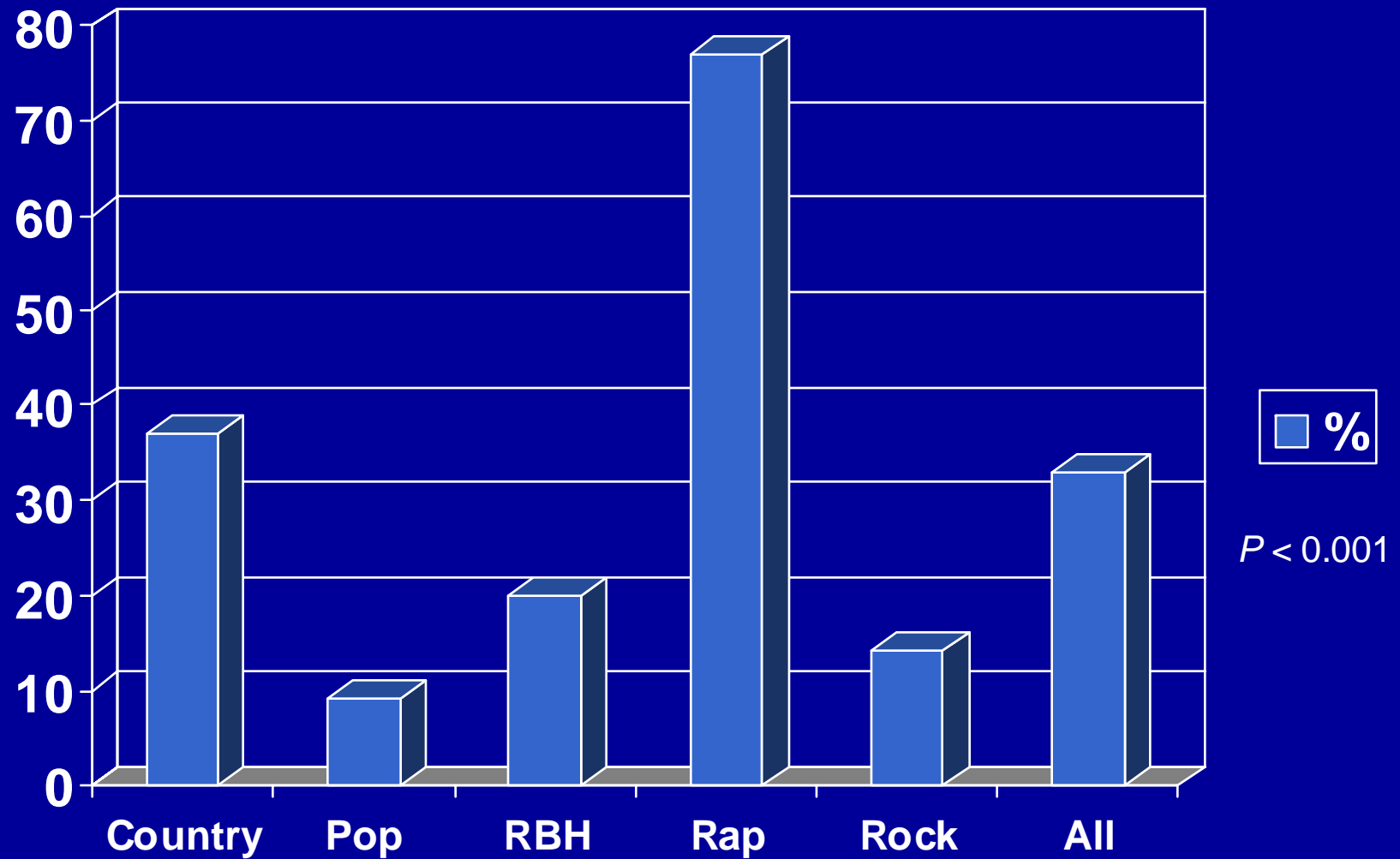
- Significance defined as $P < 0.05$
- Chi-squared tests
 - Compare substance abuse outcomes by genre
 - Compare motivations for, associations with, and consequence of substance use across genres
 - Compare sexual outcomes (degrading, non-degrading sex) across genres and other song characteristics

RESULTS

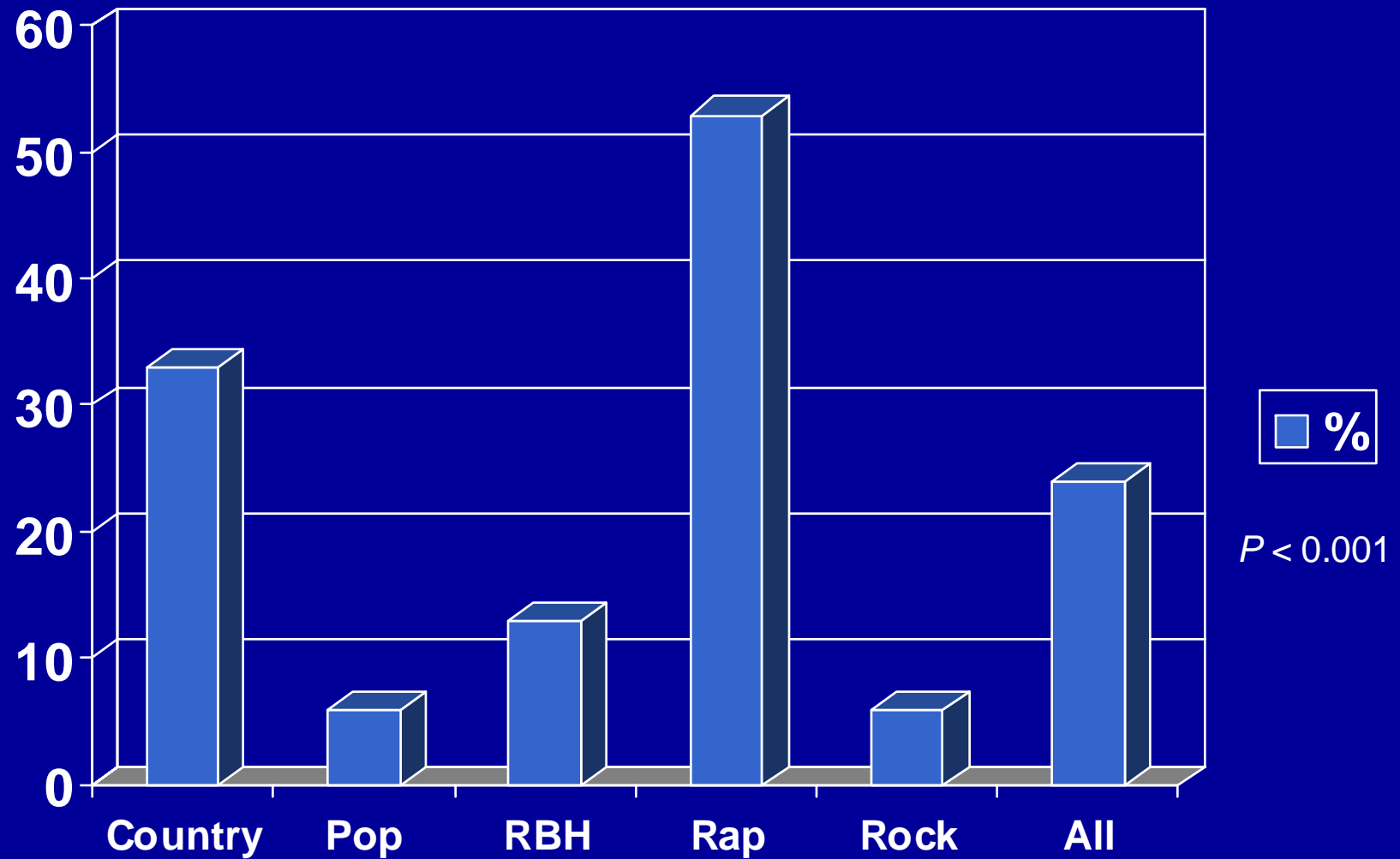
Results: Use



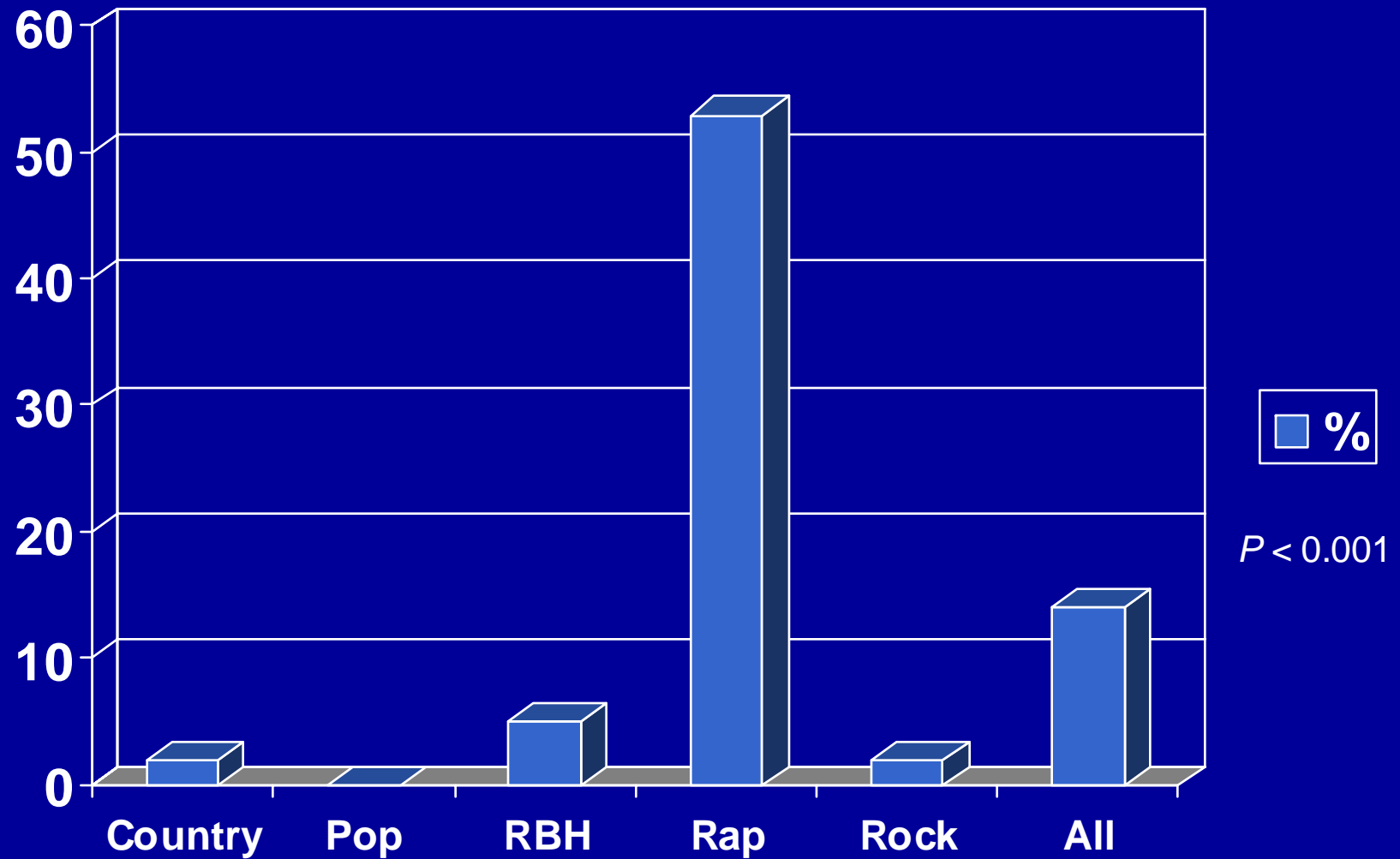
Explicit Use



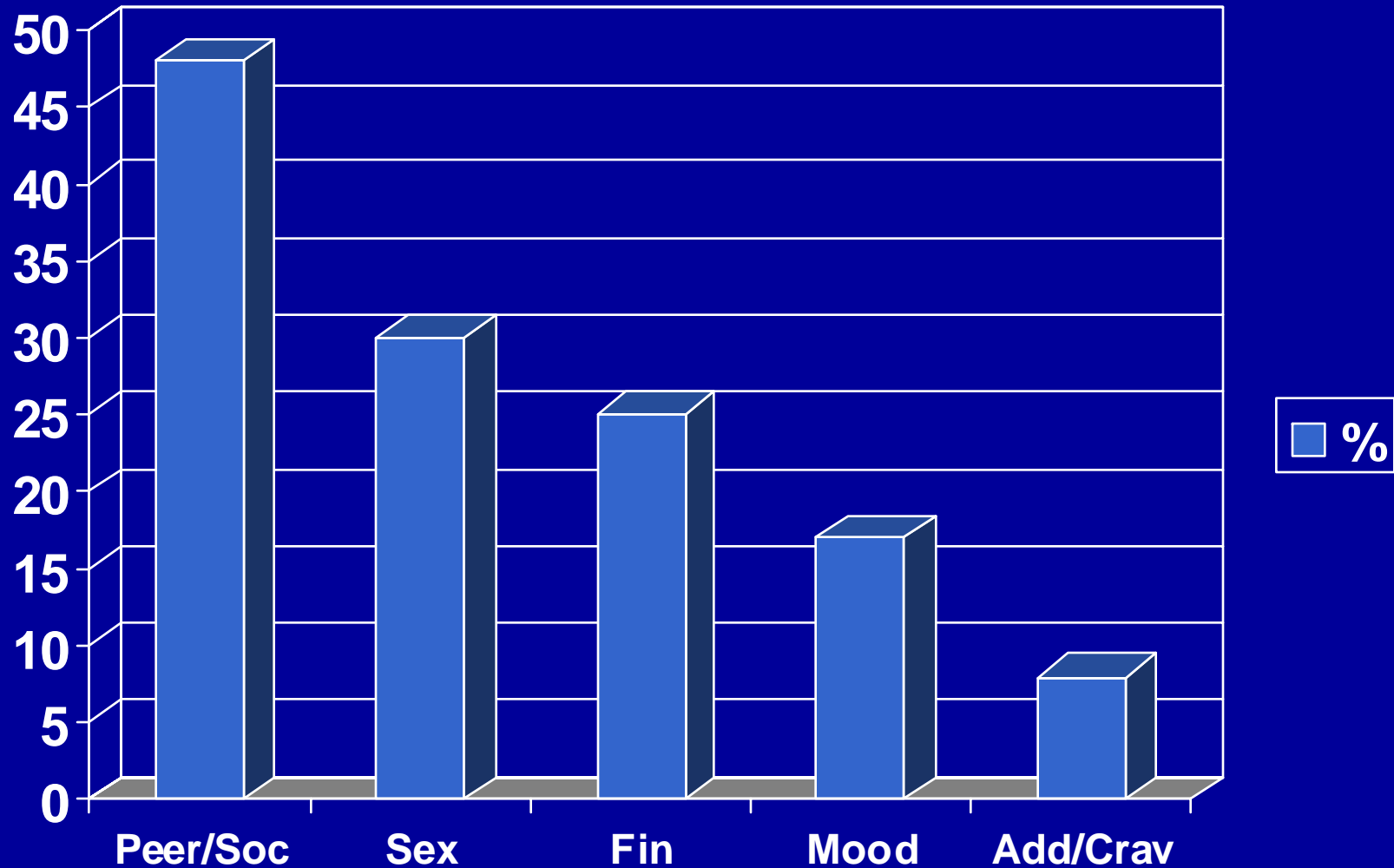
Alcohol



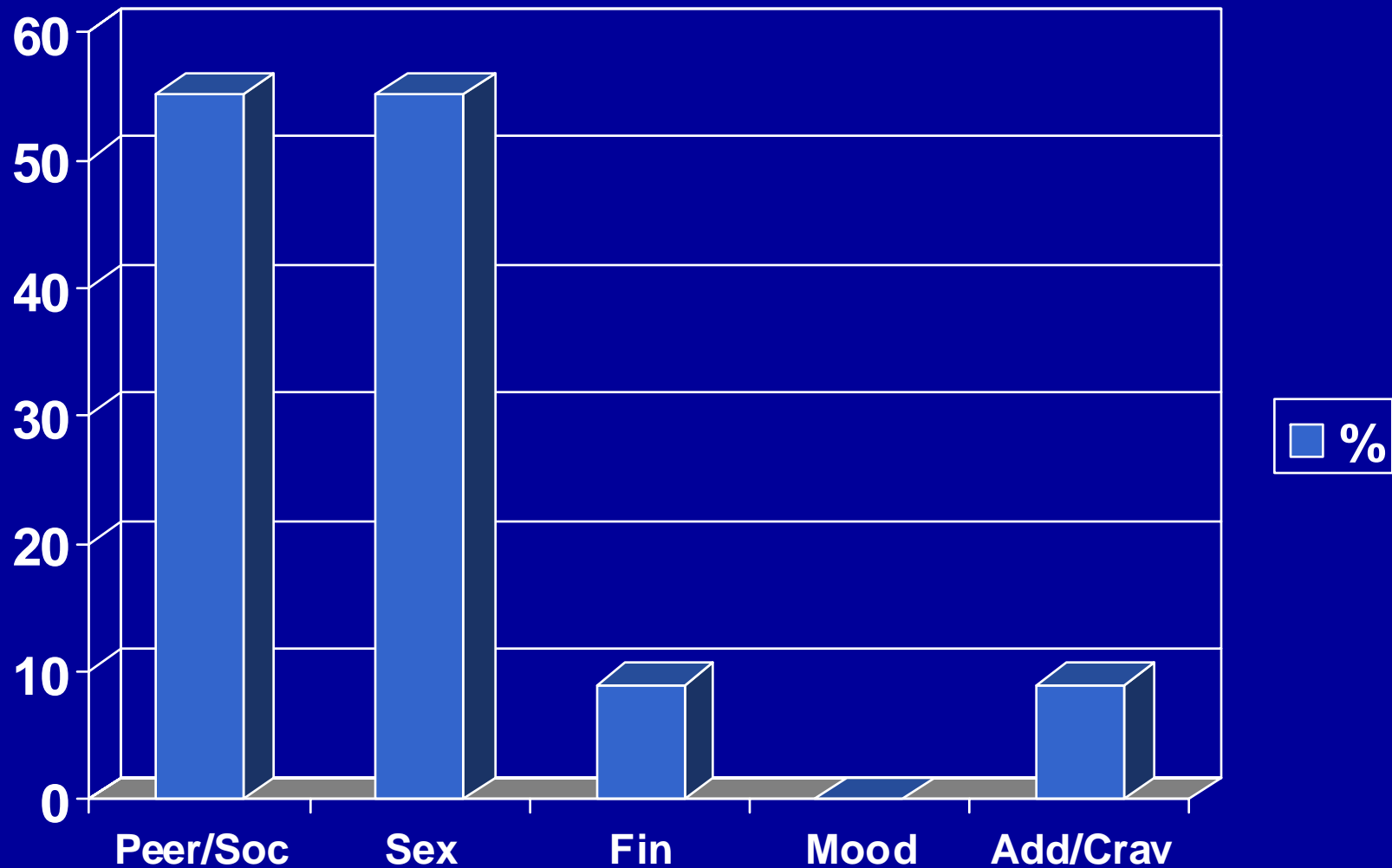
Marijuana



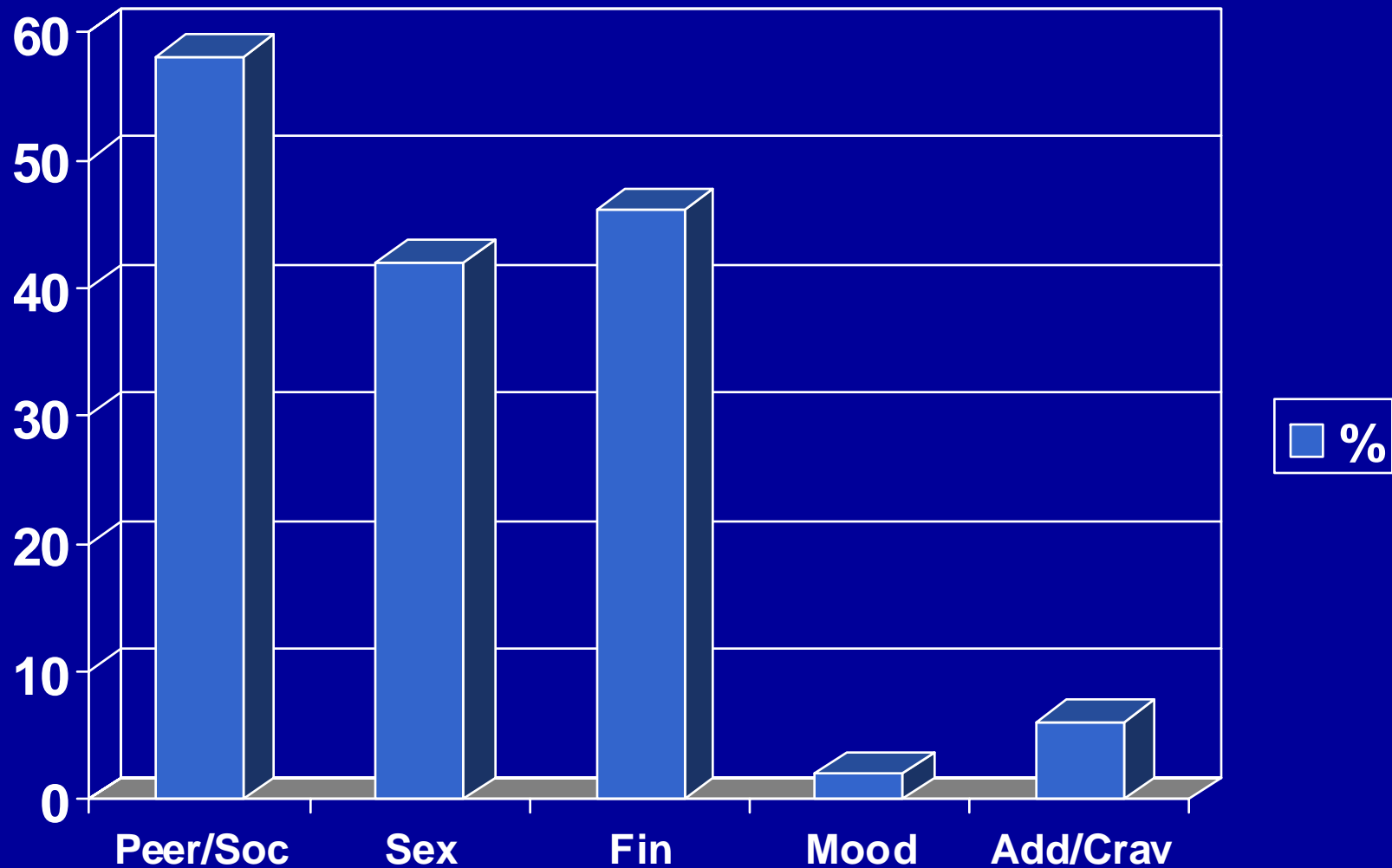
Motivations for Use (All Genres)



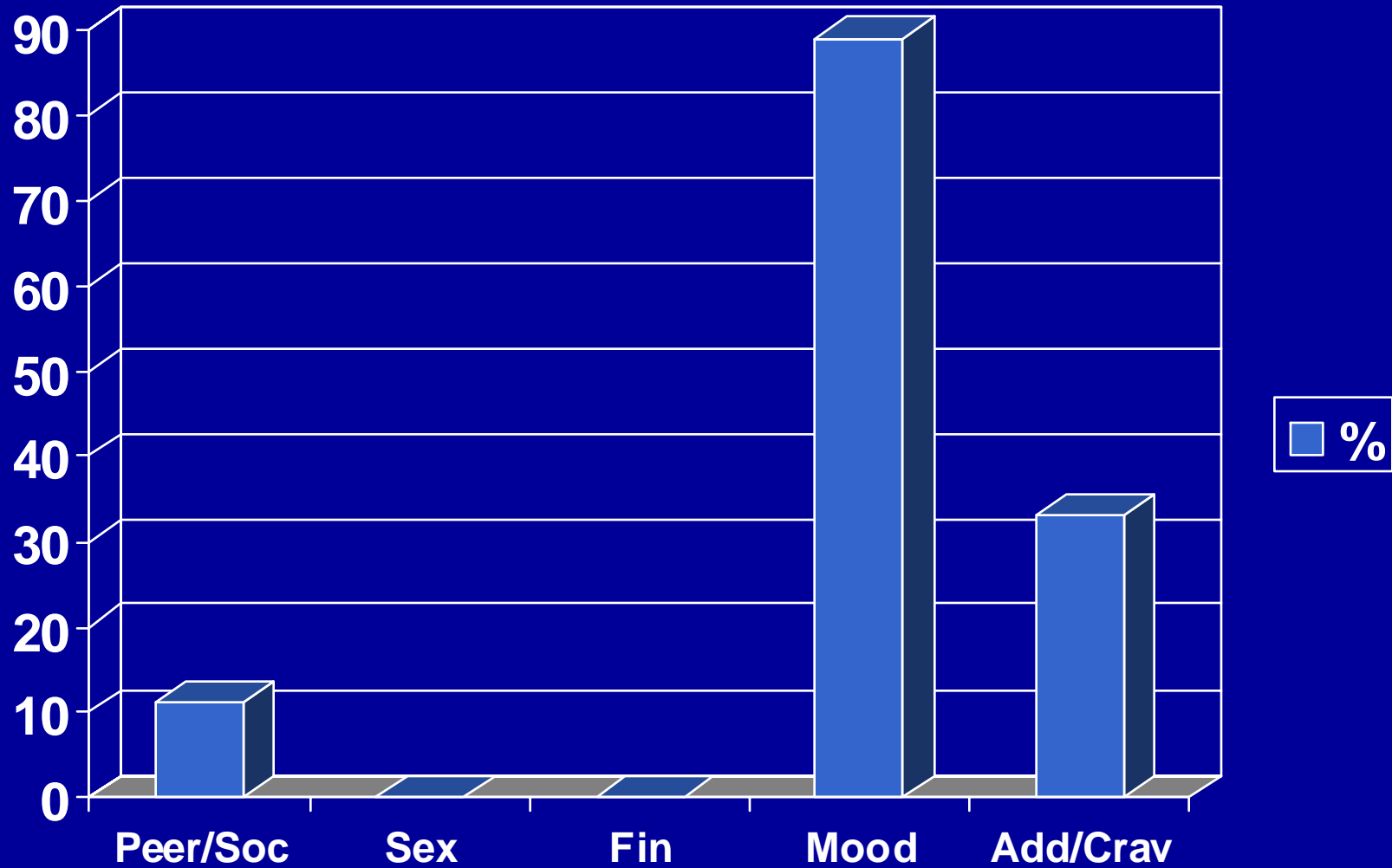
Motivations for Use (R&B/Hip-Hop)



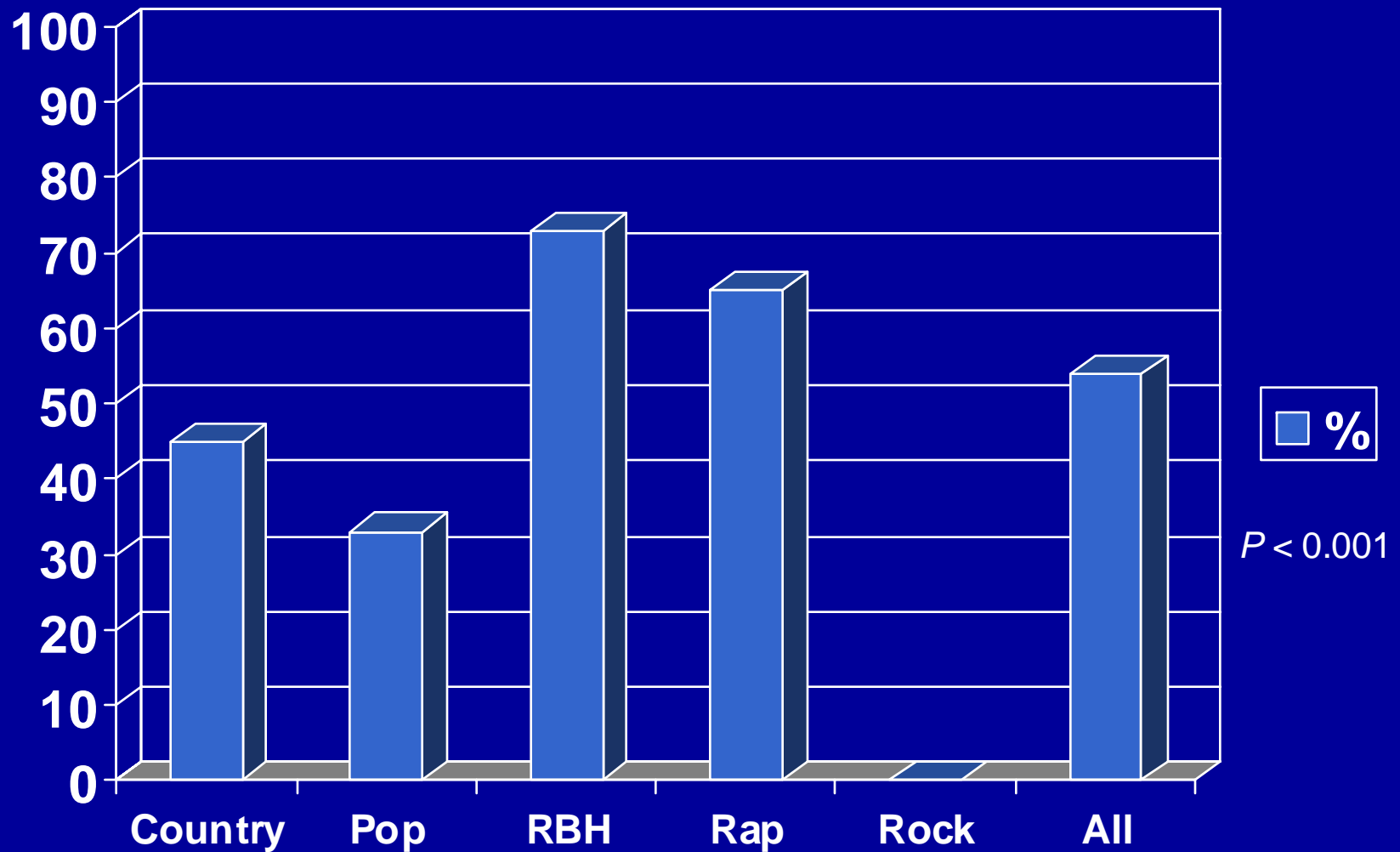
Motivations for Use (Rap)



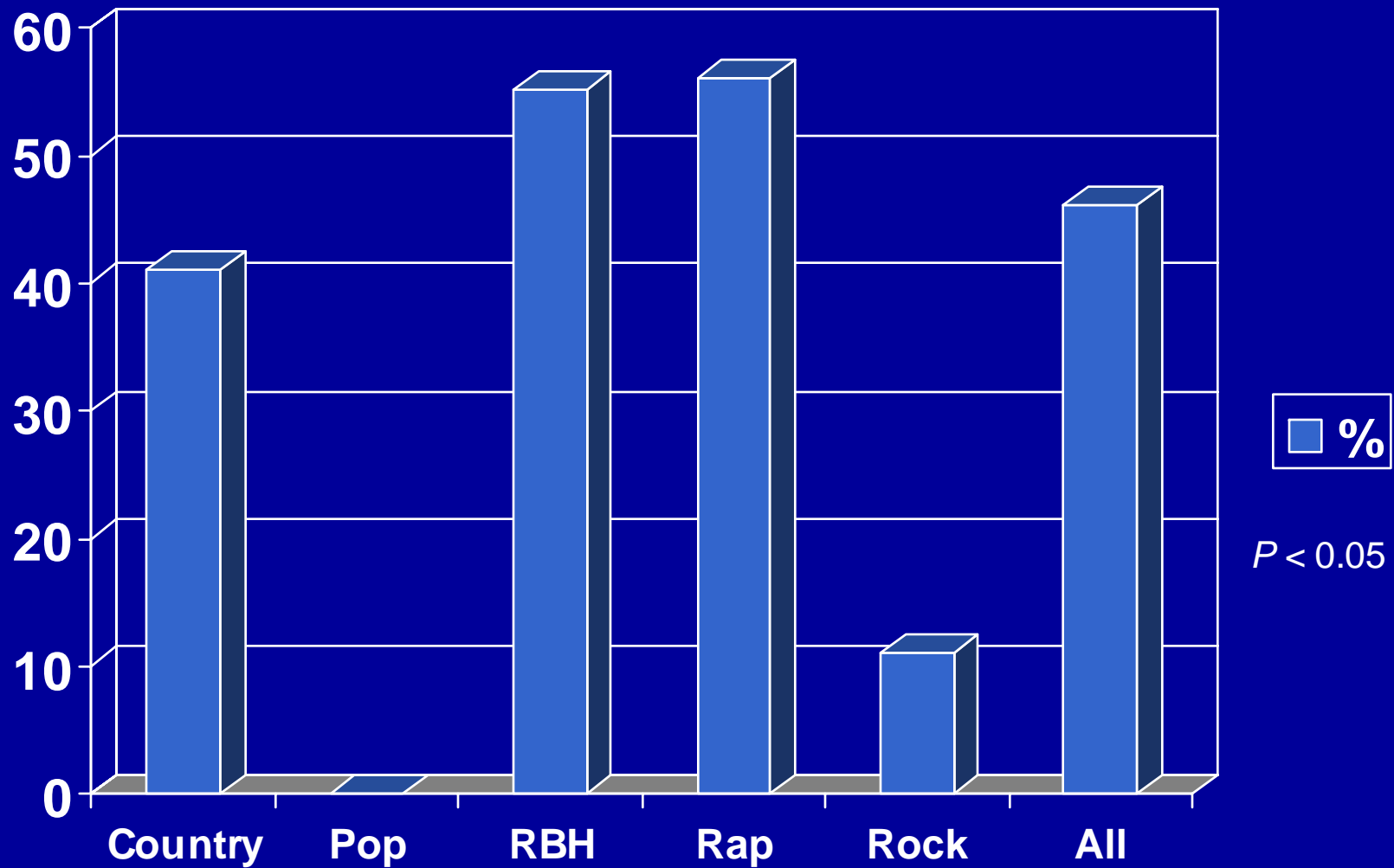
Motivations for Use (Rock)



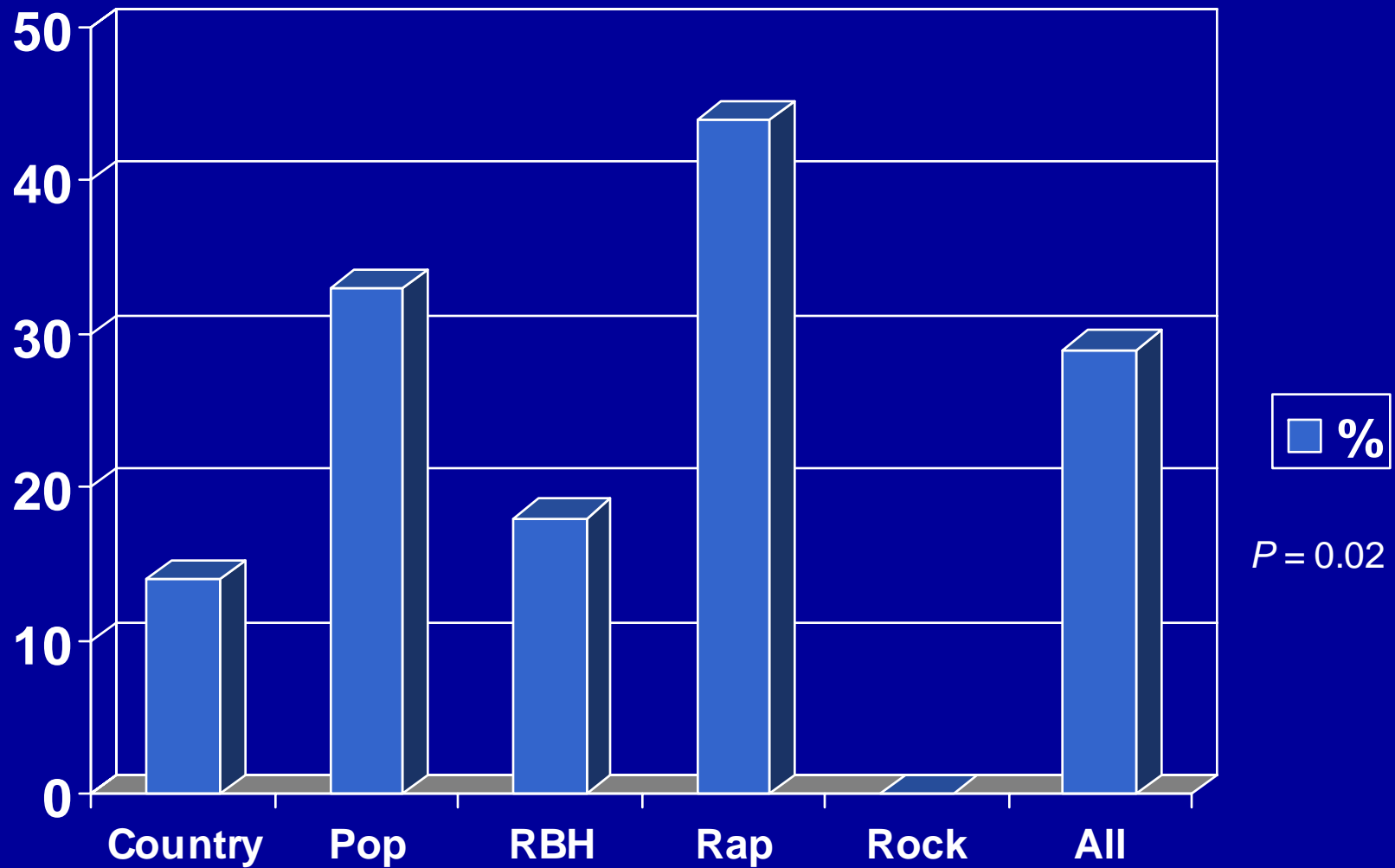
Associated with Partying



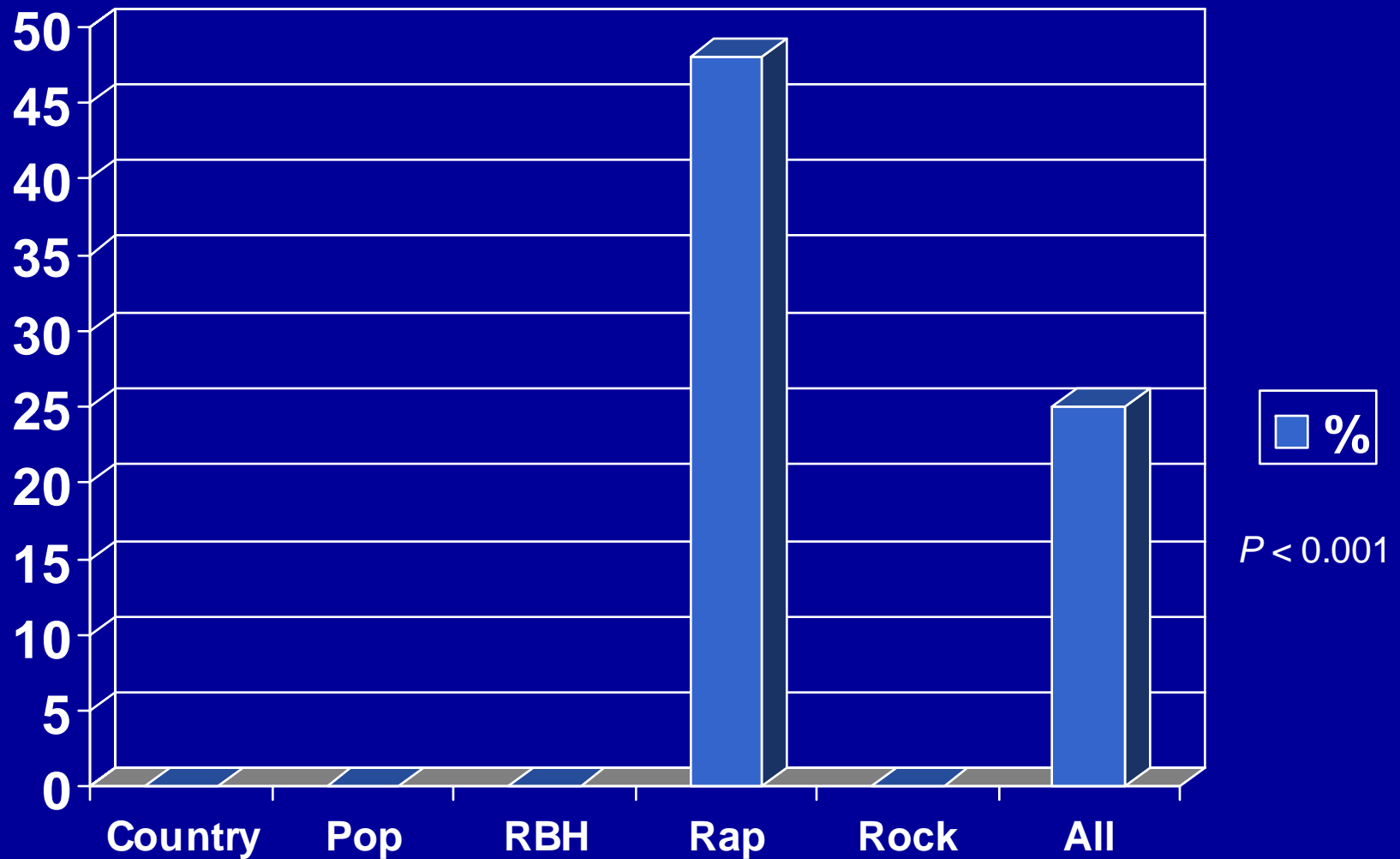
Associated with Sex



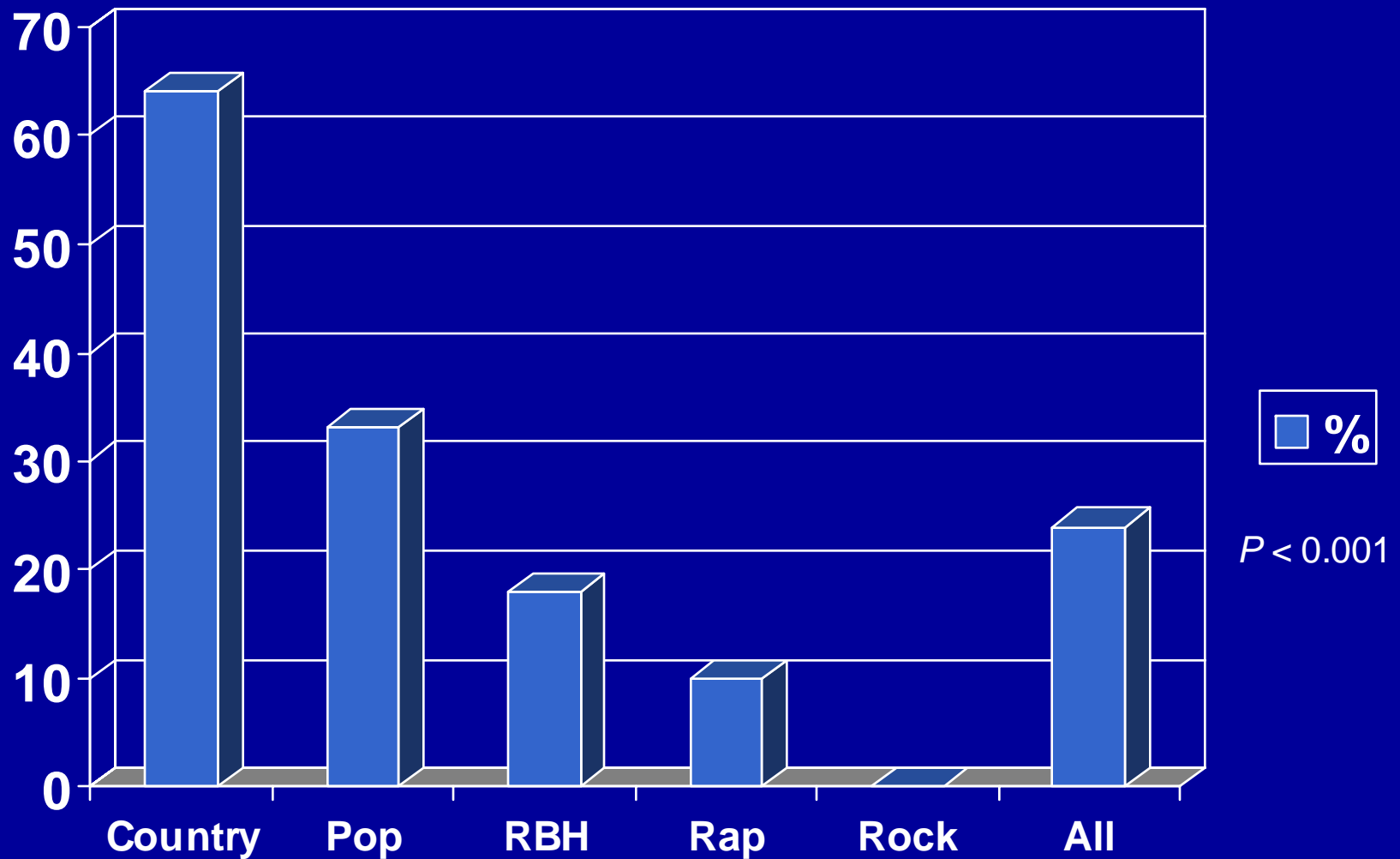
Associated with Violence



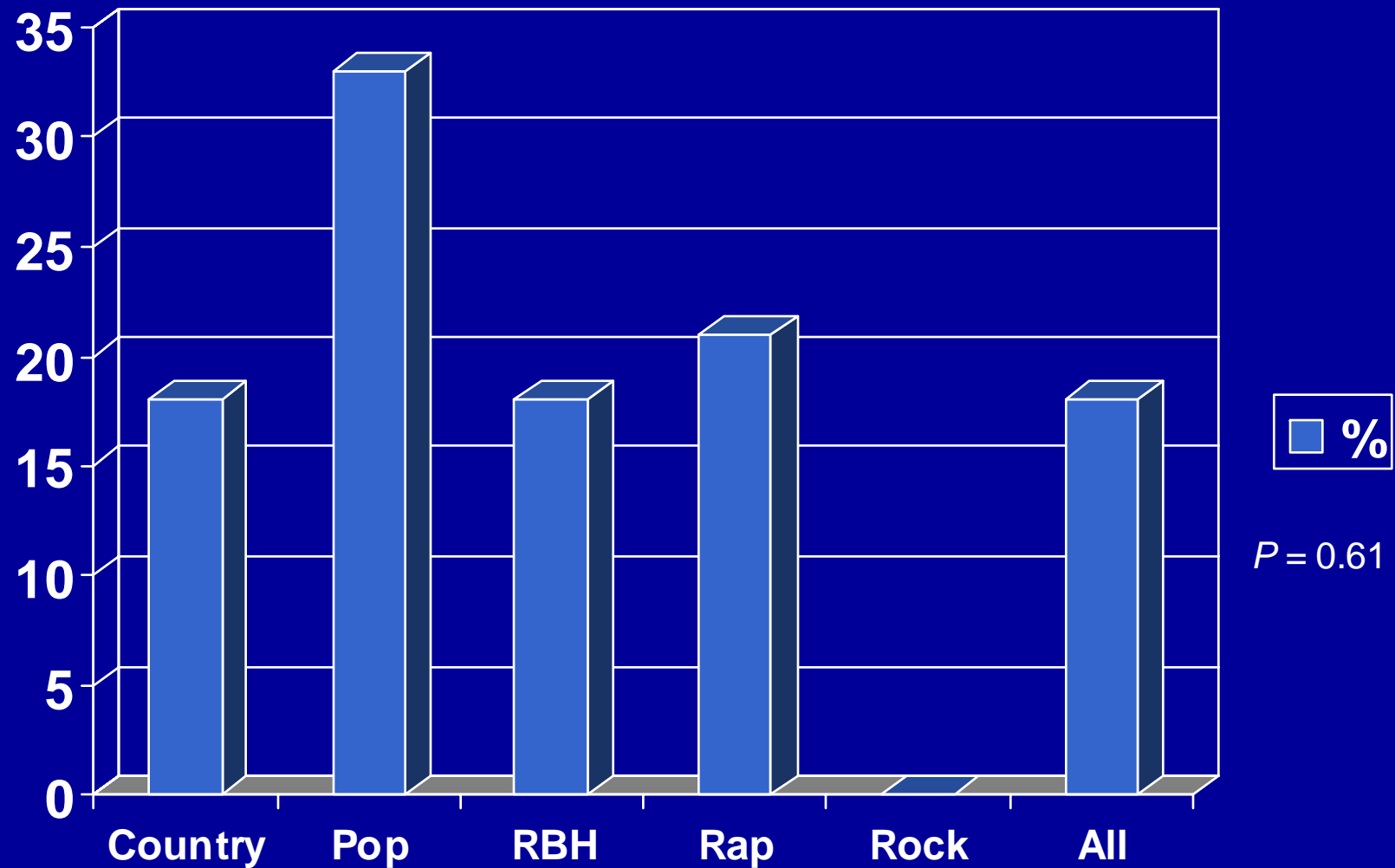
Associated with Dealing/Trafficking



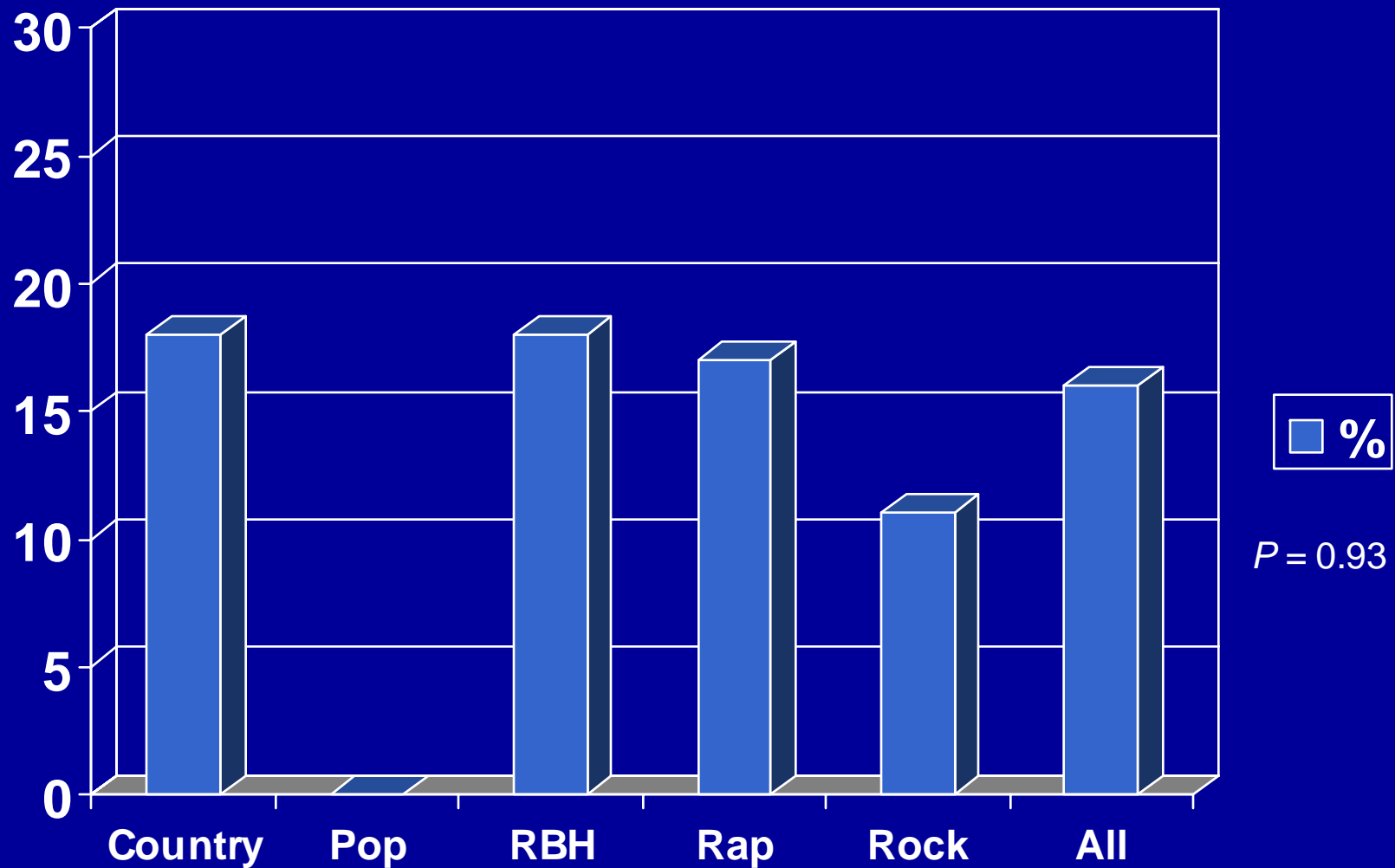
Associated with Humor



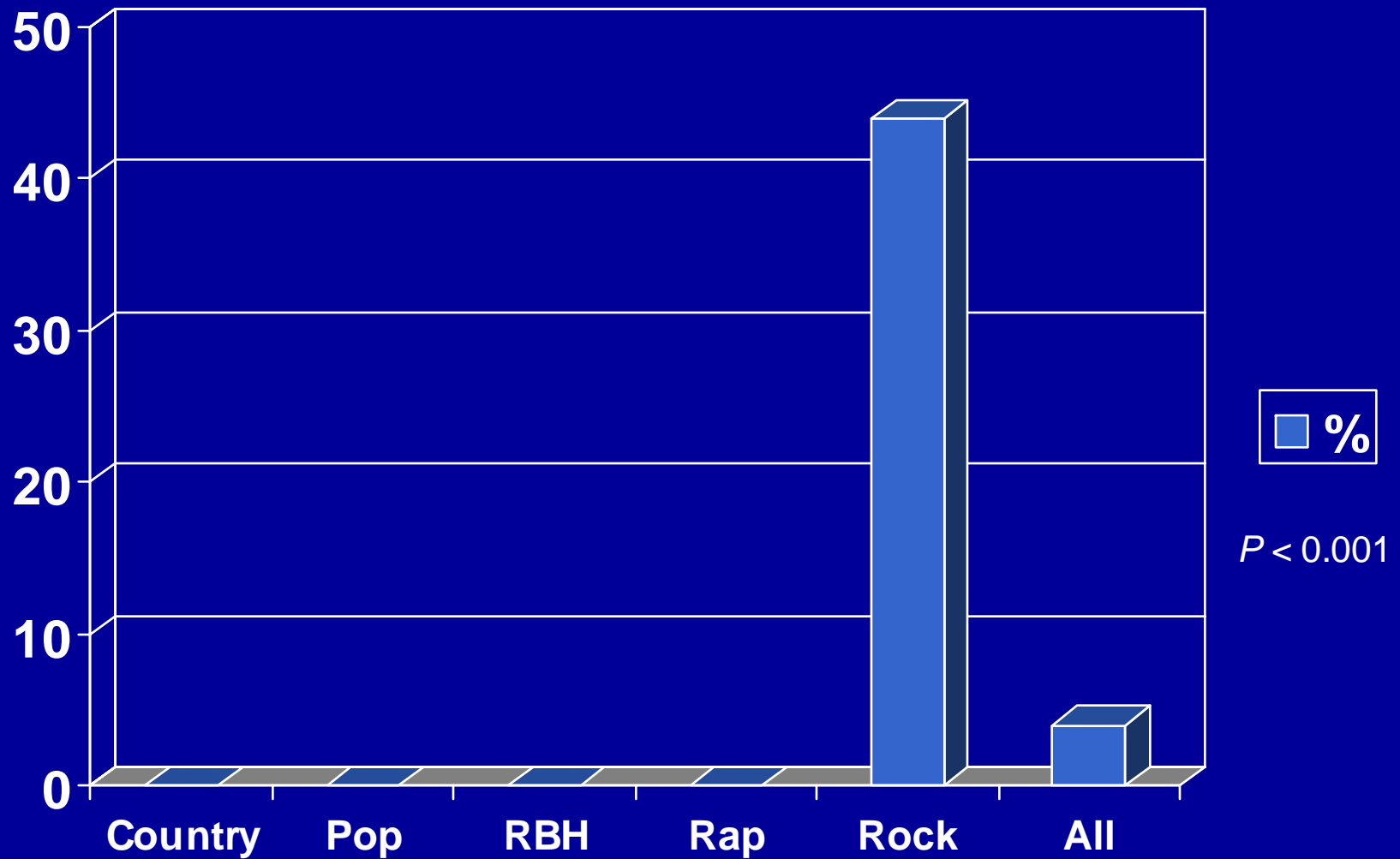
Associated with Specific Brand



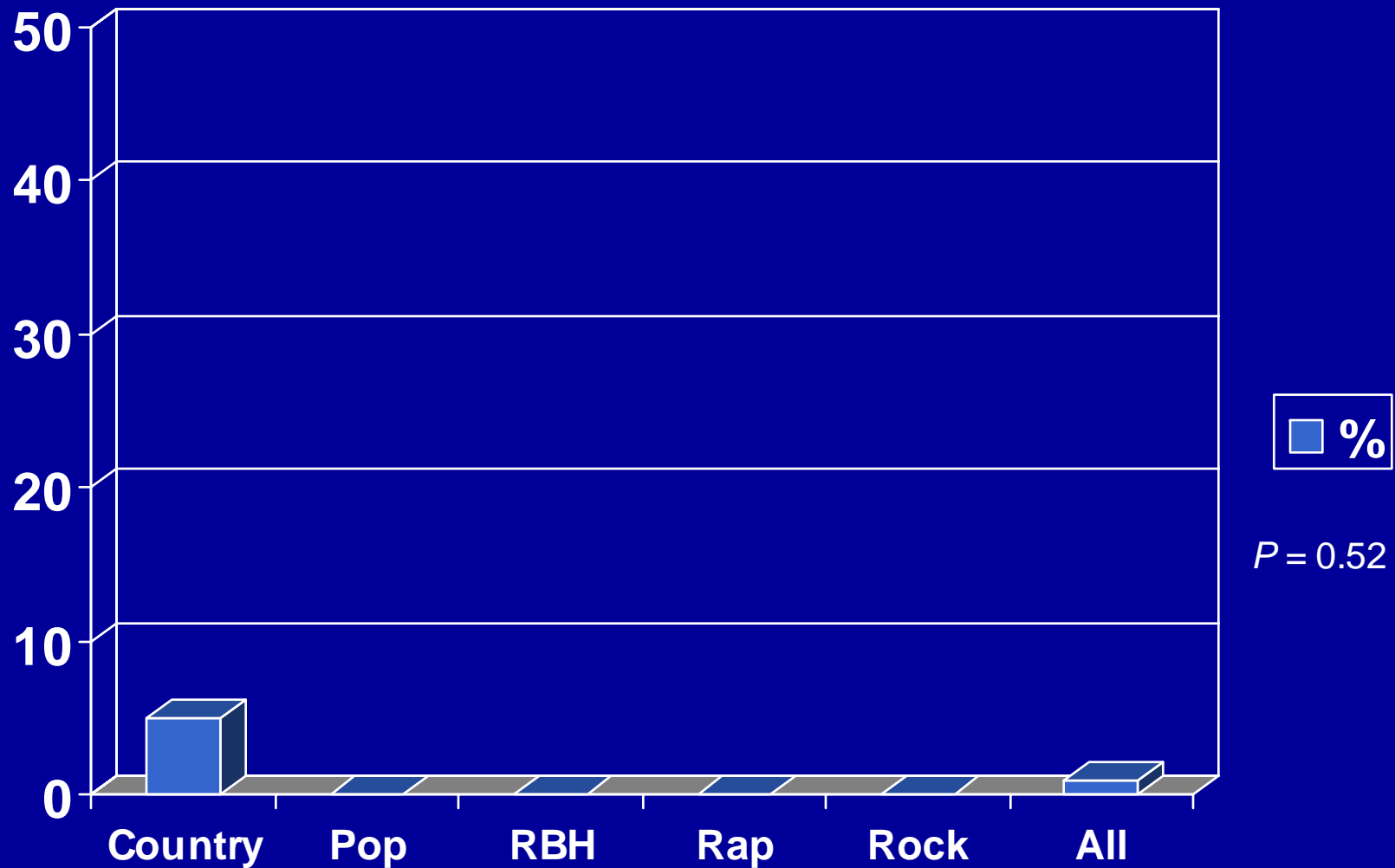
Associated with Vehicle Use



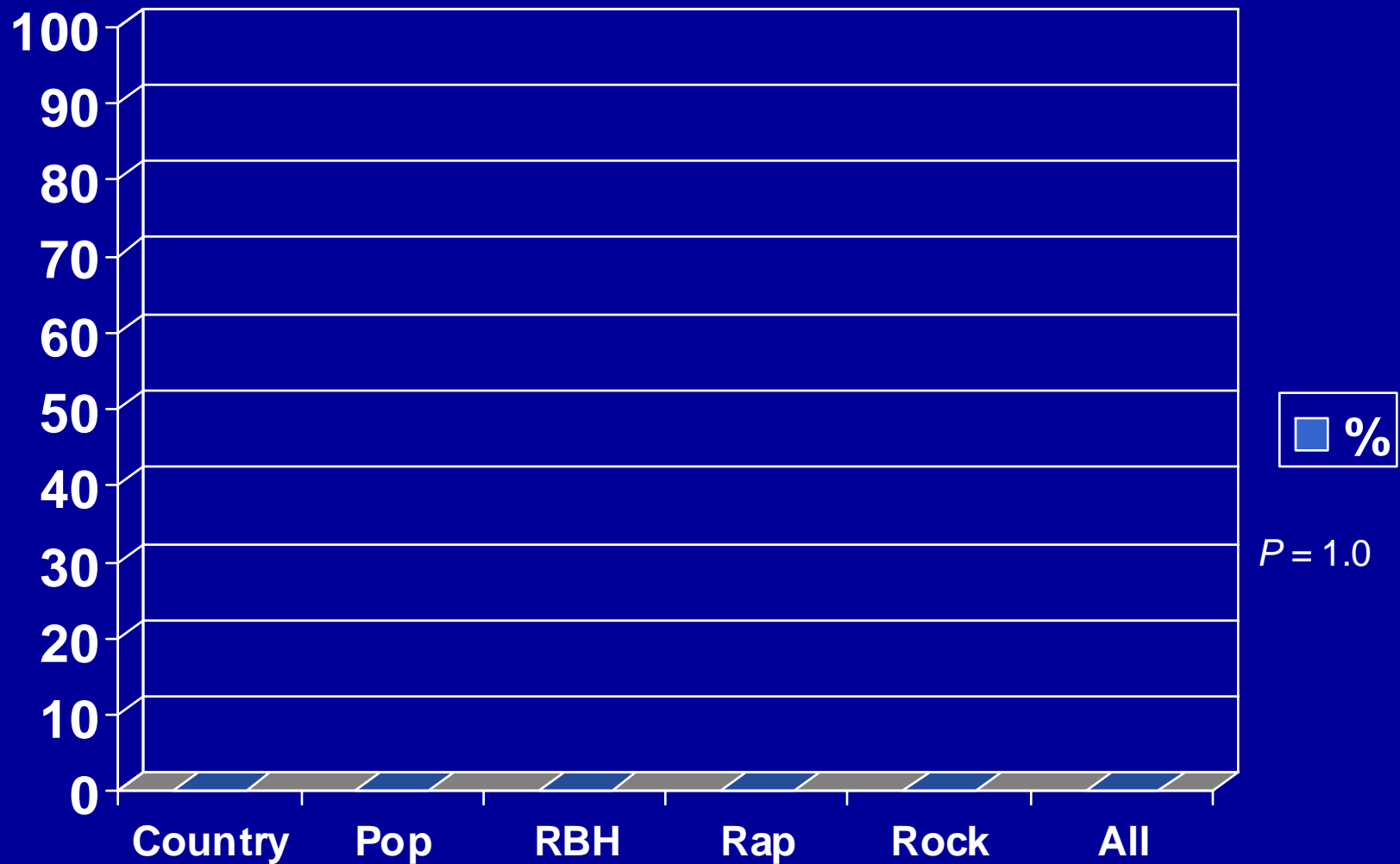
Anti-Use Message



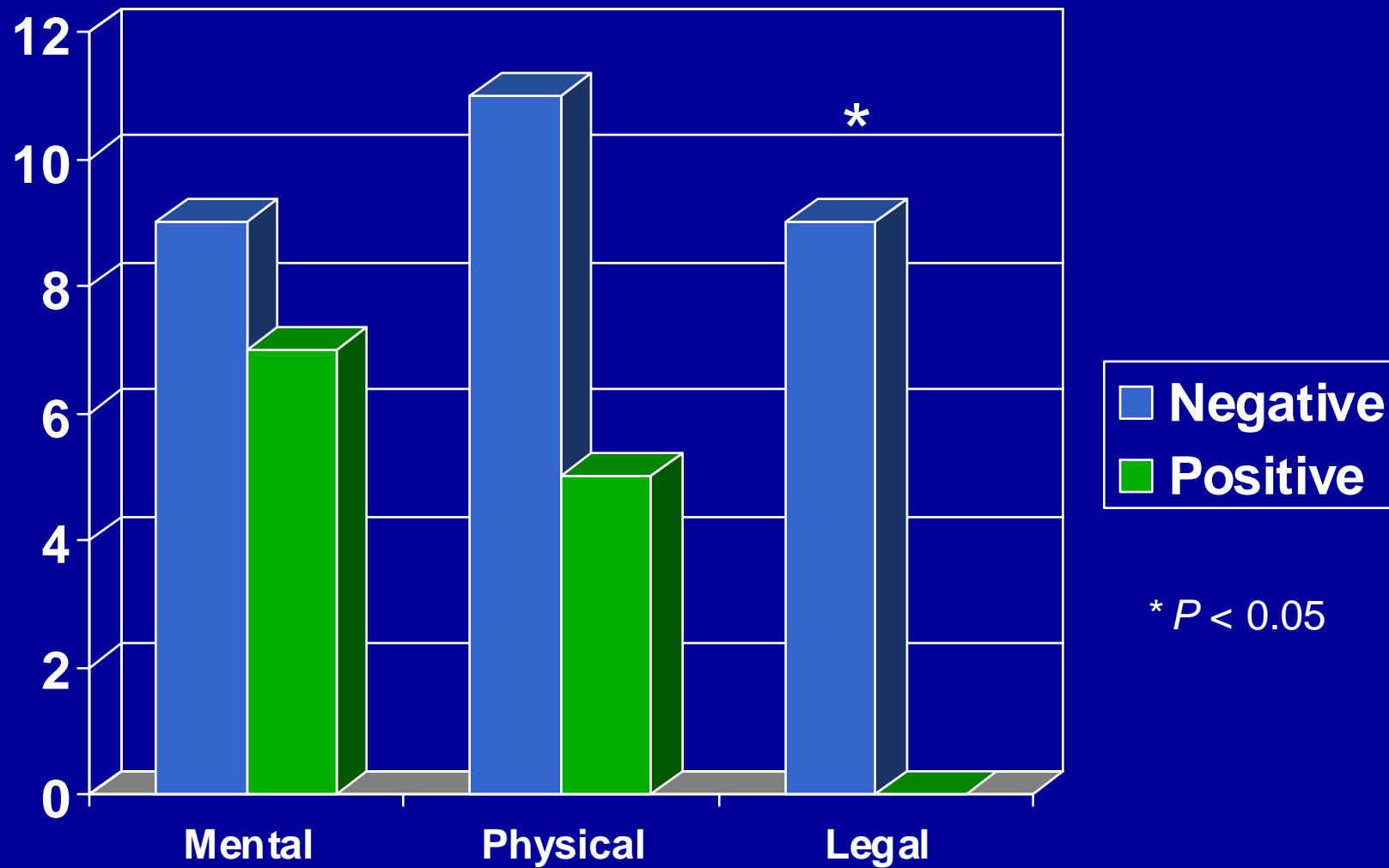
Associated with Limit Setting



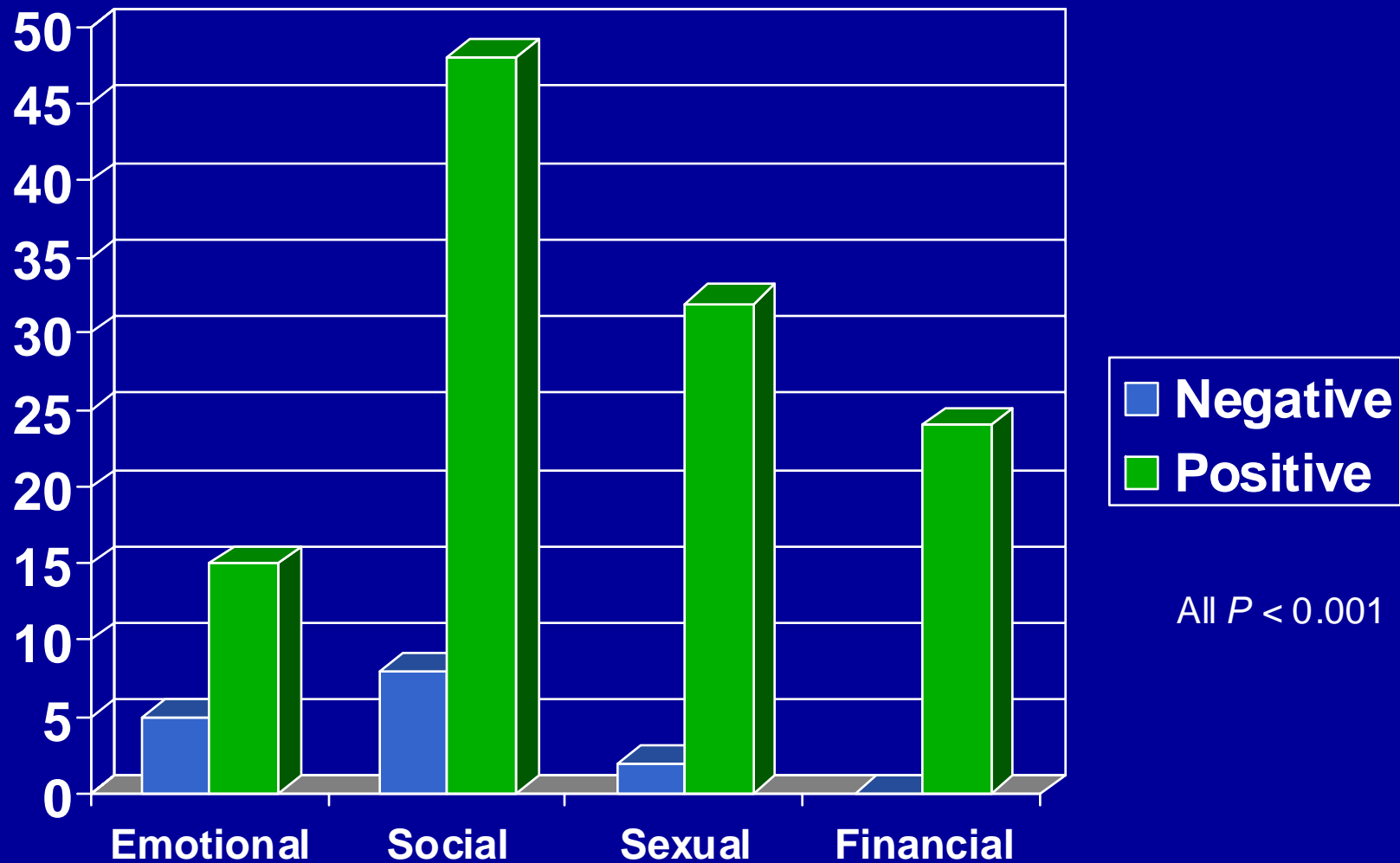
Associated with Use Refusal



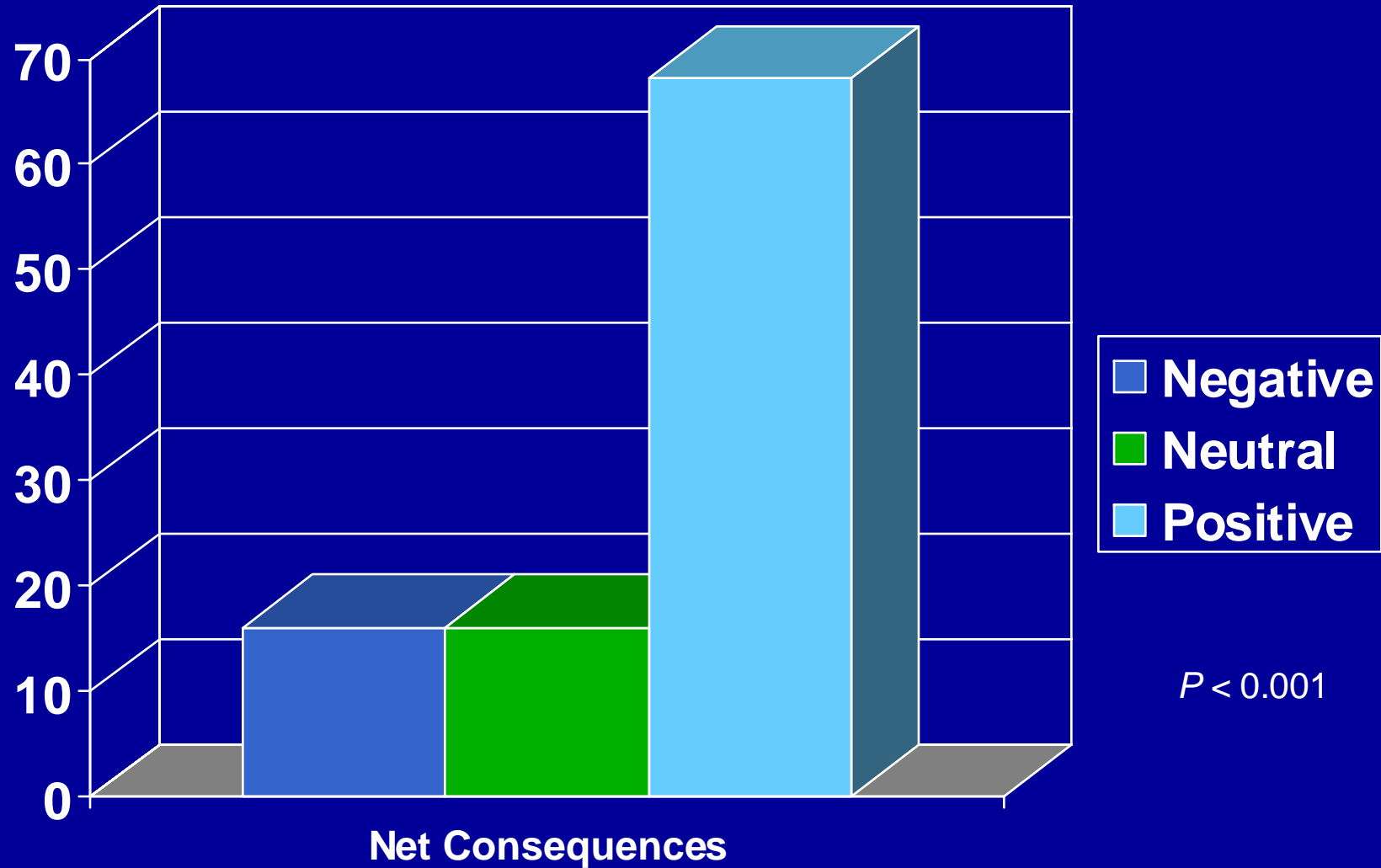
Consequences of Use



Consequences of Use



Consequences of Use



All Genres

Substance Type	References per Hour
Tobacco	0.7
Alcohol	13.7
Marijuana	11.4
Other Substances	11.4
Any Substance	35.2

Rap

Substance Type	References per Hour
Tobacco	1.2
Alcohol	21.6
Marijuana	38.3
Other Substances	43.4
Any Substance	104.5

DISCUSSION

Major Points: Substance Use

- Explicit substance use: 1/3 of songs
- Alcohol (23.7%) and marijuana (13.6%) most frequent
- Differs substantially by genre
 - Rap: 77%
 - Pop: 9%
- Motivations: peer/social pressure, sex
- Associations: partying, sex
- Consequences
 - Positive: social, sexual, emotional, and financial
 - Negative: mental, legal, and physical

Volume of Exposure

- Average adolescent is exposed to approximately
 - 84 references per day
 - 591 references per week
 - 30,732 references per year

Clinical Implications

- Music: >30,000 references per year
- MD: 1-3 visits / year
- Health education regarding substance abuse: about 6 hours
- Understand what we are up against
- Ask / think about genre

Media Literacy

- Analysis and evaluation of media messages
- May be better than trying to “Fight fire with fire”?

Exposure → use?

- Exposure to media smoking is perhaps the strongest risk factor for smoking initiation and progression (DiFranza 2006, Sargent 2005, Dalton 2003)
- Exposure to substance use in music may be a strong risk factor for substance use initiation and progression
- Music
 - Lacks the visual element of film
 - Exposure much larger (16 hours/wk vs. 5 hours/wk)
 - Known to be highly related to personal identity; young people often model themselves in terms of dress, character, and behavior after musical figures

Consequences

- Negative consequences
 - Legal
 - Mental
 - Physical
- Positive consequences (focus on rebutting these)
 - Social
 - Sexual
 - Emotional
 - Financial

Limitations

- One year
- Content analysis only
- Subjectivity of judging many variables (sex, consequences, associations, etc.)
- Did not examine visual elements of songs

Future Directions

- Explore associations between exposure scores and health behaviors
 - Tobacco use
 - Alcohol use
 - Other drugs
 - Sexual behavior
 - Violence

Thank You

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Relevant Year-End Charts*

- “Pop 100” (N=100)
- “Hot 100” (N=100)
- “Hot Country Tracks” (N=60)
- “Hot R&B/Hip Hop Songs” (N=100)
- “Hot Rap Tracks” (N=25)
- “Mainstream Rock Tracks” (N=40)
- “Modern Rock Tracks” (N=40)

* Closed-out at year end

Determination of Primary Genre

- Peak position on each chart
- Highest peak on specialty chart (country, R&B, rap, rock)
- Only assigned to pop if did not reach any specialty chart but did reach “pop” or “hot”

Alcohol (5)

“She can handle any **champagne** brunch /
Bridal shower with **Bacardi punch** /
Jello shooters full of **Smirnoff** /
But **tequila** makes her clothes fall off”

Motivation: Addiction

**“Got medication, a new addiction... /
I had a relapse, I’m bad at rehabs /
It ruins everything”**

Rx use associated with humor

“Well, your therapist says it was all a mistake /
A product of the **Prozac** an' your co-dependent
ways /

So who's your enabler these days? /

My give-a-damn's busted /

You can crawl back home, say you were wrong /
Stand out in the yard and cry all night long /

Well, **go ahead and water the lawn /**

My give-a-damn's busted”

Positive emotional consequences

“Grabs him a girl and he holds on tight /
He’s chasing everything in sight /
He’ll fall apart when he gets home /
But right now his worries are gone /
Life looks **good, good, good /**
Billy’s got **his beer goggles on”**

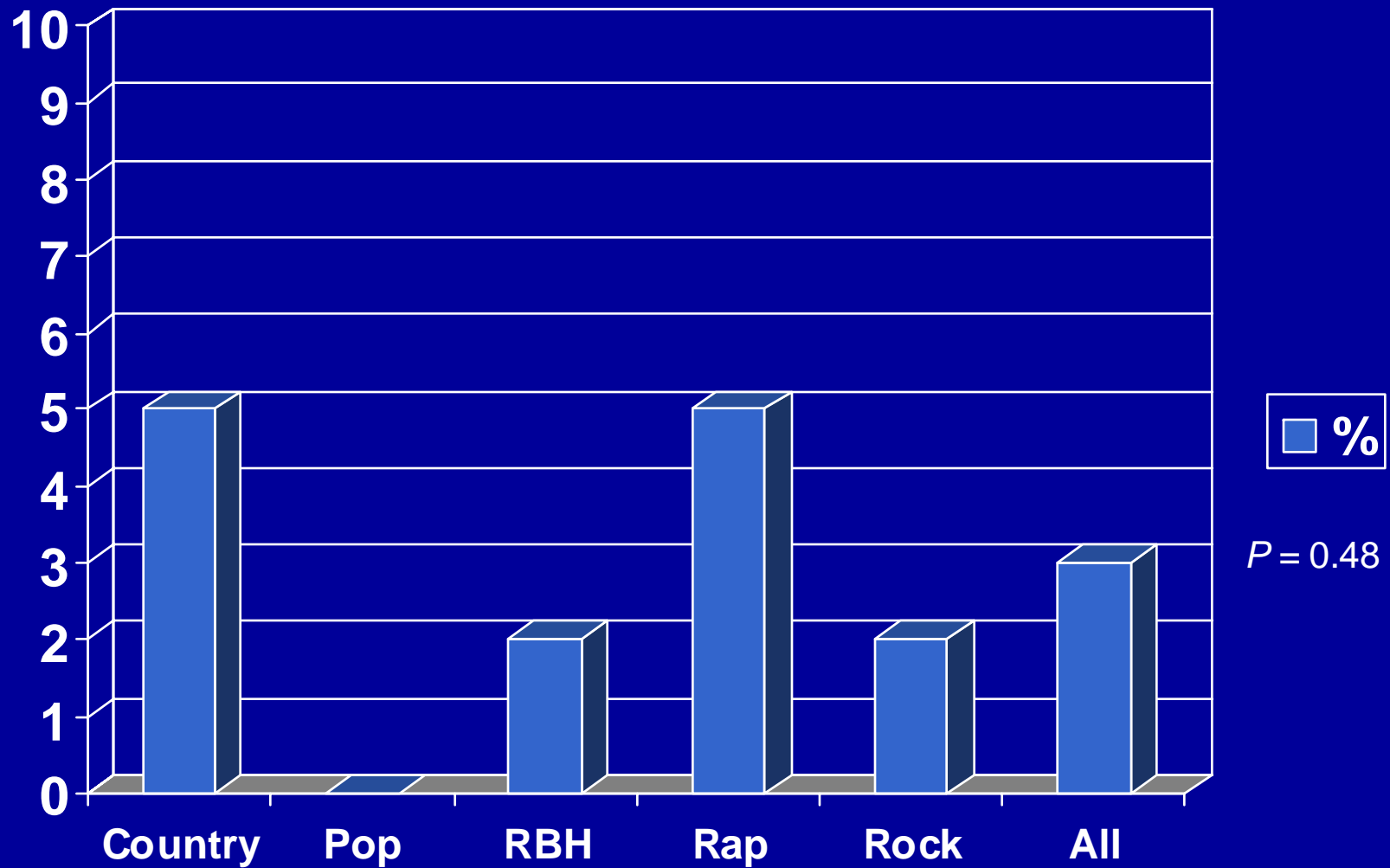
Positive social consequences

**“We pop chris my niggas and still drink
beer /**

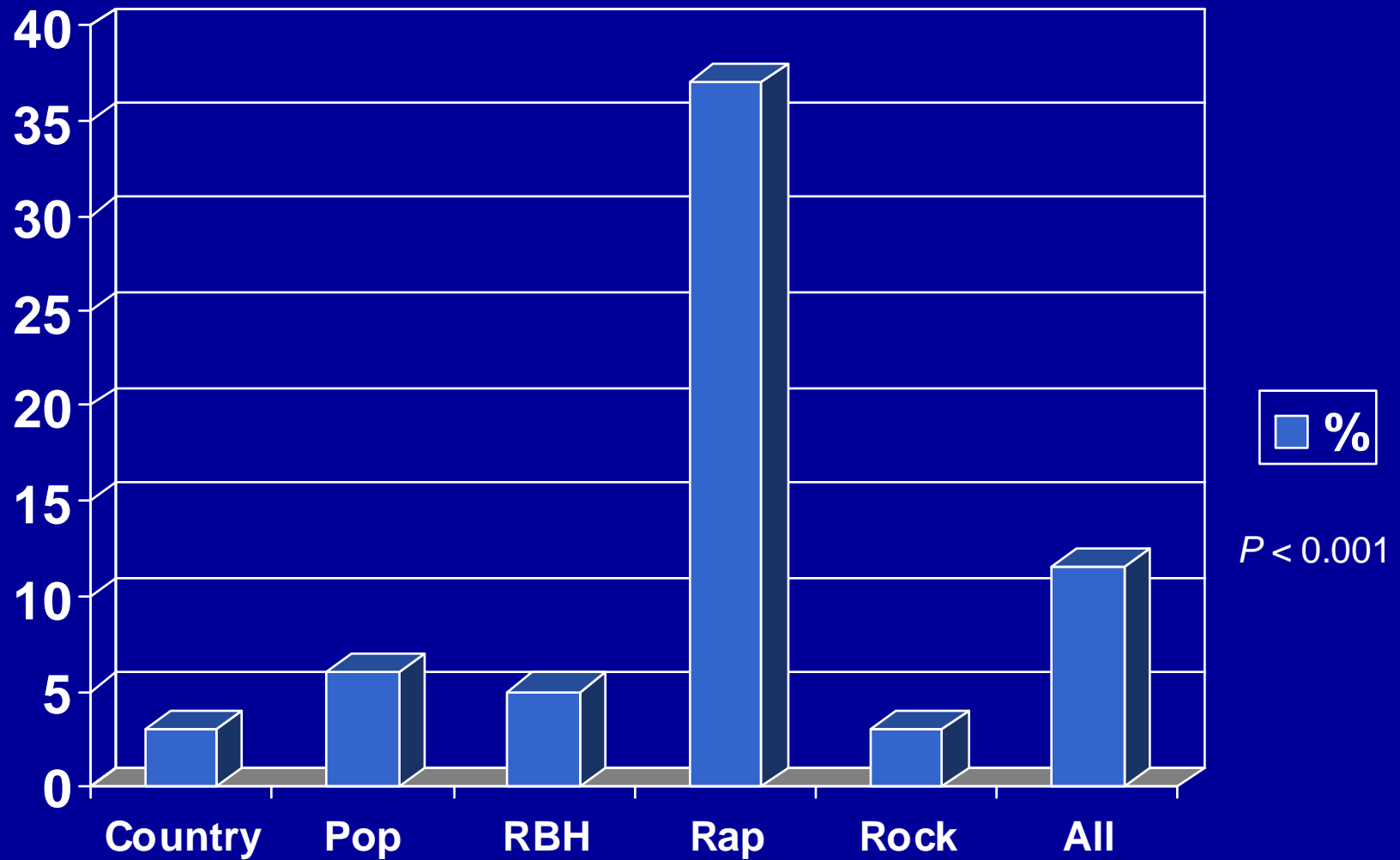
**What did you expect man I came from
nothing /**

**Real street niggas wouldn't change for
nothing”**

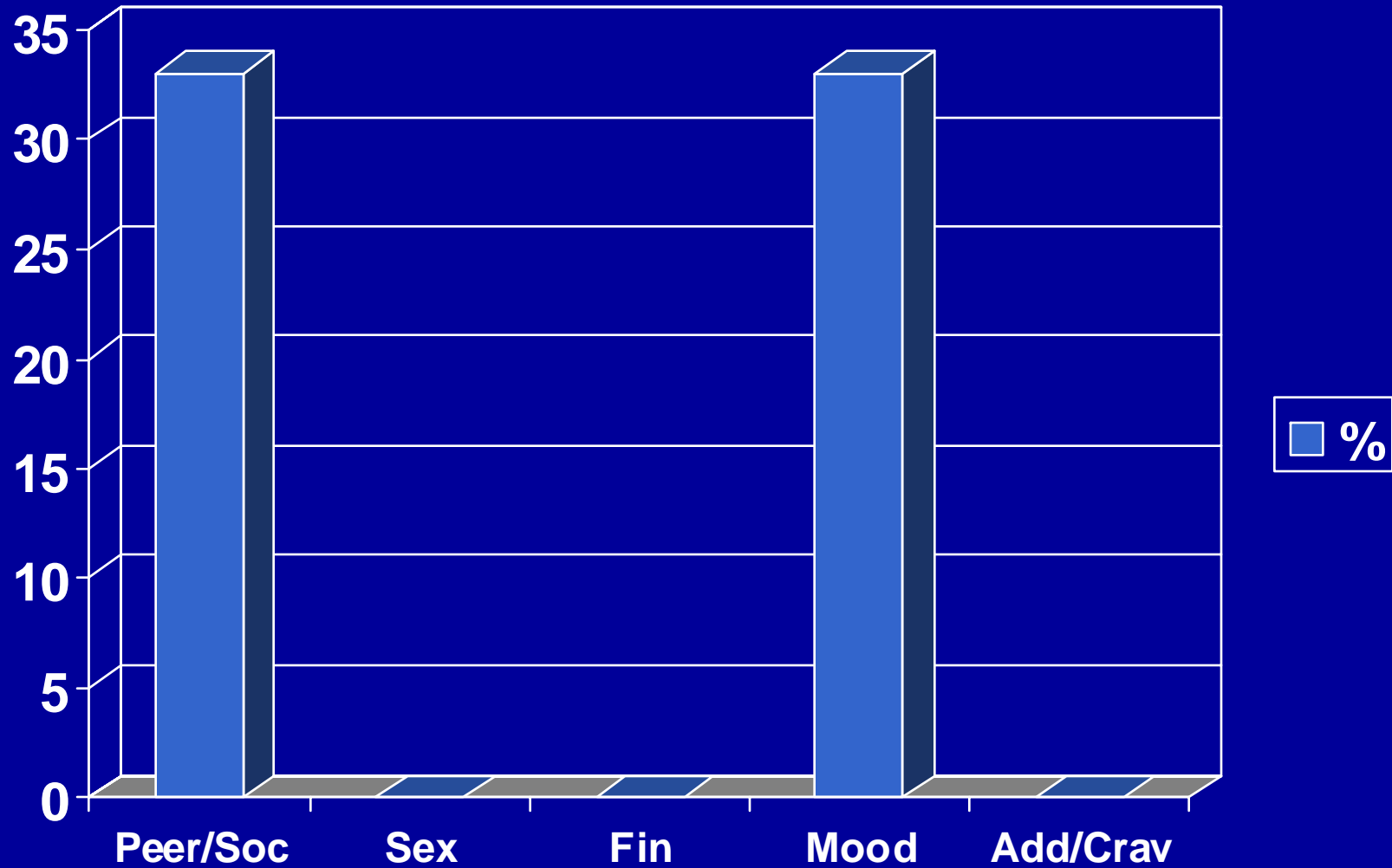
Tobacco



Other



Motivations for Use (Pop)



Country

Substance Type	References per Hour
Tobacco	0.9
Alcohol	30.1
Marijuana	1.1
Other Substances	1.6
Any Substance	33.7

Pop

Substance Type	References per Hour
Tobacco	0
Alcohol	1.0
Marijuana	0
Other Substances	1.0
Any Substance	2.1

R&B/Hip-Hop

Substance Type	References per Hour
Tobacco	0.1
Alcohol	8.7
Marijuana	3.3
Other Substances	1.8
Any Substance	14.0

Rock

Substance Type	References per Hour
Tobacco	1.0
Alcohol	2.0
Marijuana	0.2
Other Substances	3.6
Any Substance	6.8