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Social Status, Self-Development, and the Process of Sailing Specialization

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The specialization framework argues that participation in a leisure activity is a linear process of self-development where people progress from novice to expert. Aversa (1986) challenges this notion of a linear progression and argues that sailors enter the activity in different ways tied to one's social status. Some enter through yacht clubs, others through sailing schools, and still others through boat shows. Depending on the entry into sailing, people develop unique sailing preferences and behaviors, and therefore distinct expressions of sailing specialization. This study compared the linear continuum approach implied in most specialization research with Aversa's social status framework, which implies multiple routes to specialization. Data came from sailors at the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in Wisconsin. The results did not support the social status approach to specialization. Entry into sailing was not based on social status, and differing styles of participation were not unique to entry groups. The results supported the linear continuum concept, providing evidence that different styles of sailing participation were aligned along a developmental continuum.

KEYWORDS: *Apostle Islands, sailing, social status, specialization*

Is the process of specialization in a recreation activity a function of individual choice and desire for self-development, or is the process of specialization determined by the social context that can dictate one's entry into a leisure activity and lead to diverse styles of participation? Most discussions of recreation specialization propose a linear process of individual self-development where participants progress along stages of a continuum from novice to expert. For example, Bryan (1977, 1979) argued that fishing participants follow an ordered progression from occasional angler, generalist, technique specialist, to technique setting specialist. Empirically, most specialization researchers have used social psychological models of individual development to position participants in an activity along stages of a specialization continuum based on experience and cognitive development (Schreyer, Lime, & Williams, 1984), commitment (Wellman, Roggenbuck, & Smith, 1982), or involvement/centrality (Chipman & Helfrich, 1988). This focus on individual development assumes all participants follow essentially the same route to activity specialization. Variation in participation style and

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behavior depends on how far one chooses to progress along the specialization continuum.

This social psychological focus on self-development in the specialization process ignores the external forces of one's social context that can influence leisure behavior. Variation in participation style and behavior may instead be due to sociological variables such as social status, family structure, occupation, or life stage. For example, Kelly (1983) argued that as people pass through different life stages and experience age-specific events such as leaving home, marriage, child bearing, child rearing, career development, divorce, relocation, retirement, age-related illness, and death of a spouse, their styles of leisure participation change. Similarly, social status can dictate access to certain leisure activities (West, 1977, 1984), or dictate the style of participation one chooses within a given activity (Aversa, 1986). These external social forces can create different styles of participation and can lead to divergent trajectories of specialization in a given activity depending on the social context of the individual.

This paper compares the traditional self-development approach to recreation specialization, which assumes a single continuum of specialization from novice to expert, with the social context approach, which argues for multiple routes to activity specialization. Specifically, the paper examines whether sailing participants at the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in Wisconsin follow a developmental trajectory of activity specialization, sharing similar experiences and behavioral conventions as they become expert sailors, or whether their social context leads them to choose different styles of participation, and therefore divergent paths to sailing specialization.

The Process of Leisure Specialization

Specialization and Self-Development

According to the specialization framework, the progression along a developmental continuum from novice to expert involves a transition of leisure behaviors from the general to the specific (Bryan, 1979). Bryan says that novice anglers typically fish for any species of fish in a variety of settings with any conveniently available methods, while expert anglers fish for only one species of fish in a single preferred type of setting with a specific type of equipment that often makes the chance of success more challenging. Most leisure researchers have used social psychological models to describe this transition from general to specific behaviors in a recreational activity. The past experience literature relies implicitly (Schreyer, Lime, & Williams, 1984; Williams, Schreyer, & Knopf, 1990) or explicitly (Hammitt, Knauf, & Noe, 1989) on cognitive models of individual development. Repeated experience in a recreational activity leads to more elaborate mental representations of the activity and more refined preferences and expectations about participation.

Researchers extended this cognitive model of specialization to describe the attachment one develops to a leisure activity in the progression from

novice to expert. Empirical and conceptual studies have employed concepts such as commitment (Buchanan, 1985; Kuentzel & McDonald, 1992; Wellman, Roggenbuck, & Smith, 1982) centrality to lifestyle (Chipman & Helfrich, 1988; McFarlane, 1996) or ego-involvement (Havitz & Dimanche, 1990; Selin & Howard, 1988) to explain leisure behavior. As specialization increases, the activity becomes entwined with one's self-concept, becoming a source of personal pride, self-worth, and self-integration, and leads to an integrated leisure identity, which affects behavior beyond leisure settings (Haggard & Williams, 1992). Overall, these social psychological models in specialization research assert that the transition from novice to expert in a leisure activity corresponds to increasing skill in, and knowledge about the activity, and stronger personal and emotional ties to the activity that exert a widening sphere of influence on one's everyday affairs.

This predominant social psychological approach to recreation specialization assumes that individuals develop the skills and learn the behavioral conventions of an activity in an approximately similar way. Beginners in an activity share certain experiences, levels of attachment, and behavior norms while experts have moved beyond the previous styles of experience and share different types of experiences, degree of attachment, and behavior norms. This self-development approach emphasizes the role of the individual and assumes that people can freely choose the recreational activities they participate in and freely choose their degree of involvement.

Specialization and the Social Context

Research incorporating sociological variables to explain the specialization process has been much less frequent. Ditton, Loomis, and Choi (1992) revived and elaborated Bryan's (1979) outline of the social worlds perspective. They argued that specialization is a progressive social group segmentation process where participants define subworlds within an activity defined around shared levels of experience, commitment, technology, preferred settings, accepted practices, and standardized rules and behaviors. McFarlane (1996) compared the way childhood socialization models and "leisure career" models of adult socialization (McQuire, Dotavio, & O'Leary, 1987) affected the specialization process among birdwatchers. Kuentzel and Heberlein (1992) also showed that goose hunter's choice of hunting location (activity setting) was not a function of specialization. Instead, choice of setting was constrained by external factors such as wildlife management systems (permits, hunting zones, seasons), access, and availability of leisure time.

None of these studies that document the influence of external social factors on the process of specialization specifically addressed whether differences in the social context of leisure participation lead to different styles participation and distinct trajectories of activity specialization. Do leisure activities create a relatively homogeneous group of participants who share similar trajectories of development in the activity in spite of differences in an individual's social context? Or does the social context of leisure participation

encourage a variety of experts in a single activity who do not share similar experiences and who do not share similar behavioral conventions? Multiple styles of participation in a leisure activity may emerge based on these social influences, and consequently multiple styles of specialization. For example, in rock climbing, there may be experts at bouldering, experts at free-climbing, experts at free-soloing, and experts at aid climbing. Similarly, in sailing, there may be experts at racing, experts at long-range navigational cruising, and experts at leisurely overnight sailing. To examine this question, we use the concept of social status to analyze whether the traditional self-development approach or the social context approach is a more viable way of thinking about the process of specialization.

Social Status and Sailing Specialization

Status-Based Diffusion

The concept of social status is one way of thinking about the social context of leisure participation (Aversa, 1986; West, 1977). West (1977, 1984), in his "status-based diffusion" framework, argued that leisure activities are typically pioneered and popularized by members of the elite class, and then over time spread in popularity to the middle classes, and sometimes the lower classes of society. He documents this trend in leisure activities such as golf, bicycling, canoeing, tennis, and cross-country skiing (West, 1977). Often, the elite pioneering group withdraws from the activity as it becomes diffused across social strata, because the activity has lost its status-based significance. In other cases, upper-class participants will construct barriers to lower-class participation by enforcing life-style conventions that include "legitimate" participants and exclude "outsiders." West does not conclude that middle and lower classes alter the style of participation in an activity pioneered by the upper classes. He does state that "one finds correlations between recreation participation and socioeconomic characteristics such as education partly because leisure lifestyles are important symbolic cues in the status ordering reflected in the various socioeconomic indicators" (West, 1977; p. 198).

Social Status and Sailing

This analysis of social status and leisure participation has been extended to recreational sailing by Aversa (1986, 1990). Aversa (1986) presented a historical account of sailing and proposes a theoretical framework of divergent styles of sailing participation based on the social status concept. This framework was derived from his participant observation in a sailing school and through yacht club membership on the northeast coast of the United States. His historical analysis focused on a leisure activity that has a heritage rooted in elitism. Sailing's early history was confined to the urban centers where the wealthiest members of society built elaborate yachts and sailed their boats as a show of their wealth (Aversa, 1986). As participation grew,

yacht owners organized into invitation-only yacht clubs. The increase in yacht clubs stimulated a competitive spirit between clubs, who then sponsored races and annual regattas. Yacht racing and the elitist yacht club culture began to decline during World War II because of a shortage of skilled shipwrights, yacht-building materials, and tradesmen to make repairs. With this declining market at mid-century, sailboat manufacturers sought new areas of growth. The invention of fiberglass-hull boats in the mid-1950s enabled boat manufacturers to build less costly boats requiring less routine maintenance. Sailing no longer required great wealth, and was mass-marketed by boat dealers to a broader range of people.

The mass-marketed fiberglass hull boat led to a resurgence of sailboat cruising. This new class of boat owners would sail their boats a short distance from their home marina to some nearby scenic anchoring site, cook a meal, entertain friends or business associates, perhaps spend the night or weekend, and then return to where they started. The fiberglass hull boat also led to the emergence of the chartering business at popular sailing destinations such as the Carribean, the coast of Maine, Cheasepeake Bay, and the Great Lakes. "Bareboat" charter businesses offered sailing lessons to relative beginners and sailboat rentals. These rental fleets generally included boats without the traditional luxuries and larger size of wooden hull boats built in the earlier era. Customers could rent boats, sail from place to place, anchor and sleep in scenic bays, and purchase supplies at various marinas along the way.

Aversa's historical analysis of sailing was not intended to simply document the status-based diffusion process evident in the activity. Instead, he was interested in characterizing the way contemporary sailing participants are socialized into the activity. He argued that this socialization process "depend(s) on the *entry route* the newcomers take into the world of sailing" (p. 51; 1986). He identified three status-based ways that sailors enter the activity and argued that depending on the entry mechanism used by a sailing participant, "a newcomer's perceptions of, and subsequent participation in, sailing varie(s)" (Aversa, 1986; p. 55). Aversa, therefore implied that sailors do not experience a singular trajectory of sailing socialization. Instead, the social context that determines one's entry into the activity means that there are multiple routes to sailing socialization, and therefore multiple styles of sailing specialization.

Yacht club entrance. The first type of sailing participant includes those who begin sailing through family membership at a yacht club (Aversa 1986). Historically, sailing for this group was considered a class-conscious, "gentlemanly" activity and some vestiges of yacht club status remain (Aversa, 1990). Yacht clubs today attract a somewhat broader cross-section of society, but membership is nevertheless often dominated by the wealthy upper class and upper middle class white-collar professionals. Aversa argued that yacht club sailors tend to focus their participation around sailing races and regattas. The yacht club culture emphasizes sailing skill and the ability to master the physical, technical, and psychological demands of open water sailing (Aversa, 1986).

Sailing school entrance. A second group of people enters through courses offered by commercial sailing schools. Sailing school participants, according to Aversa, typically do not go on to purchase boats. They do continue to sail, however, and constitute the growing market for the bareboat chartering businesses found at most major sailboat cruising destinations. These chartering outfits cater to a time-strapped population of professionals at the peak of career development. These younger and middle-aged professionals struggle to balance careers, families, and leisure, and are less likely to own a boat because of the time required for upkeep. This type of sailing participant may also lack sufficient sailing time to justify boat ownership. Therefore chartering someone else's boat for a four or five day annual sailing cruise may circumvent the financial and time obligation of boat ownership, and fits better with time-strapped leisure and work schedules.

Boat show entrance. A third route of entry to sailing is through boat dealers, who attract new boaters through the boat-show venue. Boat dealers often offer sailing lessons to people who purchase boats in the hopes of attracting newcomers to the activity. Aversa notes, however, that "few sail away from the dealer's dock as a competent skipper" (Aversa, 1986; p. 55). Aversa states that the boat show venue is a mass marketing technique aimed at expanding the sailing market among all segments of society. More typically, however, the boat show entry into sailing attracts those who have little interest in yacht club membership, and those who do not want to spend their disposable income on bareboat charters. Aversa implies that the boat show route is the most typical entry into sailing for the blue-collar middle class laborer.

The Trajectory of Sailing Specialization

Is sailing specialization a singular process of self-development, or is sailing specialization expressed in multiple ways depending on social factors? The social status framework that Aversa outlined argues for multiple routes to sailing specialization. A participant's specialization trajectory should differ depending on one's entry into sailing. The leisure social worlds created by participants from different social contexts lead them to develop distinct sailing behaviors, traditions, and ways of evaluating the sailing experience. Sailors enter an activity and remain relatively insulated from the participational style and experiences of sailors from alternate entry points. Consequently, a sailing specialist who entered the activity via the boat show venue should engage in and evaluate the activity differently from a sailing specialist who entered the activity through yacht club membership. A sailing specialist who entered the activity through yacht club membership should also participate differently from a sailing specialist who entered the activity through sailing school participation. For example, the regatta tradition of yacht clubs may mean yacht club sailors focus on technique and sailing performance as they become specialists in racing. The boat show sailor may spend as much time caring for the boat as sailing the boat. This type of sailor may mix equipment

specialization with a somewhat more leisurely approach to open-water sailing. Finally, the sailing school sailor might specialize at sailing in a variety of destinations around the globe.

On the other hand, the traditional self-development approach to specialization might interpret Aversa's boat show, sailing school, and yacht club typology as a single specialization continuum. Purchasing a boat, taking sailing lessons, and joining a yacht club are evidence of progressive specialization along a singular developmental continuum. Sailing involvement may begin when a friend, relative, or business associate who owns a boat introduces a person to the activity. If the initial experience is positive, the novice may then charter a boat, starting with smaller sailboats and, with experience, build up to larger boats. At some point, the individual may choose to purchase a boat, and may indeed "sail away from the dealer's dock" (Aversa, 1986; p. 55) as something less than an expert. So, the person may take sailing lessons with the expectation of eventually taking longer and more difficult trips. Finally, as sailing skill increases, the individual may join a yacht club. In addition to the slip space and off-season storage space, yacht clubs offer the kind of social interaction among people with similar interests that facilitates the emergence of sailing as a central life interest. In sum, the yacht club offers an institutional context that facilitates the development of sailing skill, encourages a network of social interactions tied to sailing, and offers a multitude of sailing opportunities. In addition, the self-development specialization framework recognizes that a person's enthusiasm for a recreational activity may increase and decrease over time (Kuentzel & McDonald, 1992). When people sell their boats or let yacht club memberships lapse, their frequency of participation and commitment to the activity may decline. When sailing loses its role as a central life interest, then sailing specialization also diminishes.

Hypotheses

This study compared these two approaches to understanding the process of recreation specialization. The analysis classified sailors at the Apostle Islands in two ways. To analyze the social context approach to specialization, we operationalized Aversa's framework by placing people in three categories based on entry into the activity. We then used analysis of variance to compare respondent's social status, sailing experience, sailing behaviors, evaluations of the sailing experience, and commitment to sailing across the three categories. To analyze the traditional self-development approach to specialization, we operationalized a single specialization continuum, placing people in seven categories based on evidence for increasing or decreasing participation and involvement in sailing. We again used analysis of variance to compare responses across the seven categories.

If Aversa's social status framework, which argues for multiple expressions of sailing specialization, is a more viable way to conceptualize sailing specialization, data should support the following differences.

1) *Social status*: Aversa' theory is based on the social status concept. Therefore, yacht club members should have higher incomes and higher levels of education than the other two groups. Boat show sailors should have lower incomes, less education, and should be more often employed in blue-collar occupations.

2) *Sailing experience*: Sailing school participants should boat less frequently than the other two groups because they do not own boats. Further, Aversa states that yacht club sailors typically begin sailing through family membership. Therefore, yacht club sailors should be more likely to have sailed as children and have more years of sailing experience than boat show sailors who begin sailing after attaining the financial means to purchase a boat. Finally, boat show sailors, according to Aversa, are often less skilled than other sailors.

3) *Specialized sailing behaviors*: The regatta tradition of yacht clubs suggests that yacht club members should participate in races more than the other groups. Sailing school entrants who charter boats at multiple locations should more frequently engage in open water cruising on oceans or Great Lakes more than the other groups. Finally, the boat show participant should engage in leisurely overnight trips near their local port more than the other two groups.

4) *Evaluations of the sailing experience*: Yacht club sailors, because they more frequently are racers, should rate elements of the sailing experience like "being heeled over in a high wind" more positively than the other groups. Boat show sailors should rate elements of boat ownership like "keeping my boat in ship shape" more positively. Sailing school participants should evaluate the aesthetic components of the sailing experience more positively because they frequently seek new and exotic sailing destinations.

5) *Commitment to sailing*: The three groups should not differ in their commitment to sailing. Each group should be equally committed to their preferred style of participation.

If the traditional self-development approach, which argues for a single route to specialization, is a more viable way to conceptualize sailing specialization, data should support the following differences.

1) *Social status*: There should be no difference in social status variables across the continuum. Social status may be a barrier to entry for some, but should not be a constraint to specialization for participants.

2) *Sailing experience*: Sailing experience should increase across each category from novice to expert. Frequency of participation will decrease for those losing interest in sailing, although their years of experience will remain the same,

3) *Specialized sailing behaviors*: Engagement in sailboat racing, open-water cruising on oceans or Great Lakes, and overnight sailing should increase across each category from novice to expert and then decrease among those losing interest in sailing.

4) *Evaluations of the sailing experience*: Those more involved in sailing should evaluate the experiences of sailing more positively. Therefore, these

evaluations should increase across each category from novice to expert and then decrease among those losing interest in sailing.

5) *Commitment to sailing*: Commitment to sailing should increase across each category from novice to expert and then decrease among those losing interest in sailing.

Methods

Study Location

This study used data from sailors at the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore on the Lake Superior coast of Wisconsin to compare Aversa's (1986) theoretical framework with the traditional self-development approach to specialization. The Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is a unit of the National Park Service that includes 21 islands and 12 miles of northwest Wisconsin coastline. Recreational opportunities at the Islands includes visitor centers, hiking trails, picnicking areas, overnight camping, interpretive programs and various boat tours around the islands. Sea-kayaking has also grown in popularity in the Apostle Islands since the mid-1980s. The bulk of visitors to the Islands, however, are sailors who travel between different islands during the day, exploring the trails, swimming, and sunbathing on the beaches, and anchoring in the sheltered bays of the islands at night.

Sampling

To compare Aversa's social status approach with the self-development approach, data were taken from the 1985 wave of a panel study administered to Apostle Islands users first in 1975, and to the same sample again in 1985. The 1975 survey sampled almost half (1200) of all the approximately 2500 boaters, campers and day users of the Apostle Islands in 1975. The sample was identified using a combination of onsite contacts and slip rental receipts from three of the four local marinas (Heberlein & Vaske, 1979). A total of 846 out of 1200 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 74%. Among those who responded, 647 were boaters while 199 were day users and campers. Only the boaters were included in the 1985 follow-up survey. In the 1985 follow-up, 500 of the original 647 boaters were located. Out of that group, 397 people responded to a mailed questionnaire, representing a 79.4% response rate. Of those 397 responses in 1985, 53 respondents in 1985 did not match the sex of the 1975 respondent and presumably were filled out by a spouse or partner in 1985. These 53 responses were excluded from this study's analysis. This reduced the total sample size to 354 respondents, representing a response rate in 1985 of 54.7% of the original 647 boaters. This study used only the 1985 data from the panel study. The 1975 data did not include many of the measures (e.g., yacht club membership, sailing school participation) used to categorize sailors according to Aversa's theoretical framework.

Measurement

Sailor typologies. This study categorized people in the sample in two ways. The first was according to Aversa's typology (boat show, sailing school, yacht club). Of 354 people in the sample, 52 people were boat owners who had never taken sailing lessons and who had never belonged to a yacht club. These people were categorized as boat show sailors. Another 74 people had taken classes from sailing schools and were categorized as sailing school participants. Finally, 121 people in the sample were either current members or past members of a yacht club. One limitation of this typology is that membership in the sailing school group did not preclude boat ownership, and membership in the yacht club group did not preclude boat ownership or a sailing school experience. Nevertheless, this classification strategy does not negate the social status implications of each category. Moreover, the sailing school experience and the yacht club experience orient people to different sailing experiences and perceptions.

Second, people were categorized within seven stages of a single continuum arrayed along a progression of increasing and then decreasing involvement in sailing. The first group (n = 107) included those who had never owned a boat, never taken sailing lessons, and never belonged to a yacht club. The second category included the boat owners who had never taken sailing lessons and had never belonged to a yacht club (n = 52). The third group (n = 32) included those who had taken sailing lessons, but who had never owned a boat and never belonged to a yacht club. The fourth group (n = 42) included those who had taken sailing lessons and owned a boat. The fifth group was the most expert of the seven groups. These people (n = 48) owned a boat, had taken sailing lessons, and belonged to a yacht club. The remaining two groups represented those whose participation was waning. The sixth group (n = 36) included those who were *either* yacht club members but former boat owners *or* were boat owners but former yacht club members. Finally, the seventh group (n = 37) included people who were *both* former yacht club members *and* former boat owners.

Specialization indicators. The analysis included indicators of four specialization dimensions: 1) experience and frequency of participation, 2) specialized boating behaviors, 3) evaluations of the sailing experience, and 4) commitment to sailing. The *experience and frequency of participation* measure included four indicators: the total years of sailing experience, the regularity of sailing over the years (seldom since I started, occasionally, about half the years, most years, every year), and a combined measure of the typical number of sailing trips one takes and days spent sailing each year. The fourth indicator of experience was a self-rated measure of sailing skill (none, novice, intermediate, high, expert).

The *specialized boating behaviors* dimension included three indicators. The questionnaire asked how often respondents participated in sailing races. It asked how many years respondents had sailed in boats that had overnight accommodations. Finally, the questionnaire asked how many times the respondent had taken longer distance trips across open water.

A third dimension of specialization measured respondent's *evaluation of the sailing experience.* This experiential dimension is typically not included as an indicator of specialization. Nevertheless, the cognitive tradition in specialization research claims that the more specialized individual has a more detailed understanding of the activity (Bryan, 1979; Williams, Schreyer, & Knopf, 1990) and a stronger emotional attachment to the experience. Respondents were therefore asked to evaluate a series of 21 sailing-related experiences. These items were factor analyzed to create three index variables. The first index measured on-the-water experiences of sailing and included "being on the water in a strong wind," "being heeled over in a high wind," and "using navigation skills to get from place to place" ($\alpha = .80$). The second index measured people's orientation to their boats, and included "puttering and keeping the boat in ship-shape," "taking pride in my boat when others see it," and "feeling like I'm taking care of my investment" ($\alpha = .73$). The third index measured the aesthetic experiences of sailing, and included "watching the sunrise or sunset over the water," "being the only boat anchored in a harbor," and "having time alone with my spouse or partner" ($\alpha = .57$).

Finally, the *commitment* dimension included two measures: intensive commitment, and extensive commitment (Stryker, 1987). Intensive commitment reflects the emotional ties and lifestyle identification (Buchanan, 1985) that one has developed toward boating as a self-identity. This identity scale was constructed from four items ($\alpha = .84$). The first item asked how a person would feel if they had to give up boating ("I'd probably find something else just as enjoyable," "I'd miss it, but not as much as other things I do," "I'd miss it more than most things I now enjoy," and "I'd miss it more than any of the things I now do") The second item asked respondents to rate their personal interest in boating (very low, low, medium, high, and very high). The third item asked respondents to reflect on the rewards and costs of sailing and evaluate to what degree boating is "worth it" to them (5-point scale from definitely no to definitely yes). The fourth item asked how often the respondent's boating participation influenced other areas of one's life such as work, family, or other forms of recreation (5-point scale from not at all to very often). The extensive commitment measure asked people how many of their a) friends and b) relatives were also boaters (none, a few, some, most, all) ($\alpha = .61$).

Finally, the study included socioeconomic indicators: age, years of education, household income, and occupation. The occupation measure used the Census Bureau's occupation codes to categorize people as unemployed, service or semi-skilled laborer, business owner or manager, or white collar professional.

Analysis

The study used analysis of variance to compare responses between the three categories of Aversa's typology and compare responses between the

seven categories of the single specialization continuum on social status indicators, sailing experience, sailing behaviors, sailing evaluations, and sailing commitment. The homogeneity of variance assumption in analysis of variance is an inherent problem for specialization research. The Levene statistic in homogeneity of variance tests can often be significant when comparing generalists or novices, whose survey responses may show high variation, with specialists or experts, whose survey responses may have relatively low variation. This problem may also be compounded when comparing unequal sample sizes across different categories as in the current study. In this analysis, the Levene statistic was significant in 5 of 16 comparisons in the 3- category typology, and significant in 8 of 16 comparisons in the 7-category typology. This study therefore used a Tamhane T2 test to determine statistical significance between categories on each comparison. The Tamhane test gives a more conservative estimate of statistical difference between groups where unequal variation is problematic.

Results

Social Status Approach to Specialization

The results did not support Aversa's theoretical framework for two reasons. First, the three categories proposed by his framework were not an exhaustive typology. This three category typology excluded 107 people in the sample (30.2%) who did not own boats, had never taken a sailing class, and who never belonged to a yacht club. These people's entry into sailing was with friends or business acquaintances who owned boats. Second the comparisons of social status indicators and specialization measures across the three categories (boat show, sailing school, and yacht club) generally did not differ in the way that Aversa's framework predicted (Table 1).

Socioeconomic indicators. We expected that yacht club sailors have higher incomes and more education while boat show sailors would have lower incomes, lower education, and blue collar careers. Table 1 shows, however, that none of the socioeconomic variables differed between the three groups. On average, members of each of the groups were roughly the same age (in their late 40s), had similar levels of education (73.7% had at least a college degree), similar household incomes (roughly $60,000 in 1985), and were just as likely to be while collar professionals or business owners/managers.

Sailing experience and frequency of participation. The results only partially supported our expectation that sailing school participants would boat less frequently because they were less likely to own a boat. Sailing school participants boated less frequently than yacht club members, but did not differ in boating frequency from boat show participants (Table 1).The years of sailing experience did not differ across the three categories. While we expected the yacht club members to have more experience and boat show sailors to have less experience, each group, on average, had sailed for roughly 25 years. In all, yacht club members, who belong to an institution that facilitates regular participation boated more frequently during the year, and boated more reg-

TABLE 1
Comparison of Aversa's "Multiple Routes" Typology of Sailing Participation by Socioeconomic and Specialization Indicators.

	BOAT SHOW (n = 52)	SAILING SCHOOL (n = 74)	YACHT CLUB (n = 121)	F	p	MEAN
SOCIOECONOMIC						
Age	47.3	46.9	50.6	2.43	ns	48.8
Education	13.8	14.2	14.1	1.84	ns	14.1
Income	60.9	56.9	60.4	.26	ns	59.5
Occupation	3.25	3.05	3.12	.63	ns	3.13
SAILING EXPERIENCE						
Years experience	23.4	24.6	25.9	.93	ns	25.0
Sailing regularity	4.19_{ab}	4.09_{a}	4.47_{b}	3.59	.02	4.29
Typical trips / days	14.6_{a}	14.9_{a}	23.6_{b}	8.25	.00	19.1
Sailing skill	3.44_{ab}	3.31_{a}	3.76_{b}	6.19	.00	3.55
SPECIALIZED SAILING BEHAVIORS						
Racing	-1.05_{a}	$-.15_{a}$	1.28_{b}	13.72	.00	.36
Ocean Cruising	.98	1.16	1.43	1.79	ns	1.25
Overnight sailing	10.1_{a}	12.3_{a}	15.1_{b}	6.49	.00	13.2
EVALUATIONS OF THE SAILING EXPERIENCE						
Sailing environment	14.6	16.1	16.1	1.96	ns	15.8
Boat orientation	15.2	15.3	16.3	3.83	.02	15.7
Aesthetics of Sailing	22.1	22.0	22.6	1.73	ns	22.3
SAILING COMMITMENT						
Intensive	$.16_{a}$	$.71_{a}$	1.88_{b}	4.55	.01	1.17
Extensive	$-.10_{a}$	$.20_{a}$	1.09_{b}	7.37	.00	.57

Note. Subscripts indicate between-group differences significant at the .05 level based on a Tamhane T2 difference test.

ularly over the years than the other two groups. Because of this, they rated their level of sailing skill higher than the other two groups.

Specialized sailing behaviors. The results partially supported the idea that yacht club sailors are more frequently racers, sailing school sailors are more often ocean cruisers, and boat show sailors are more often leisurely overnight sailors (Table 1). As expected, yacht club members were more likely to engage in sailing regattas than boat show or sailing school participants. The three groups did not differ in their frequency of ocean cruising. In opposition to our expectations, the yacht club sailor, and not the sailing school sailor, had sailed significantly more years (15.1) on boats with overnight accommodations than the other two groups.

Evaluations of the sailing experience. The results failed to support our expectations about how different categories of sailors orient themselves to the sailing experience. We expected the yacht club sailor to enjoy the on-the-water sailing experience more than the other groups, but Table 1 shows

no significant differences between the groups on this item. We expected that the boat show sailor would most enjoy the rituals of boat maintenance and upkeep. The yacht club sailor, however, rated these experiences significantly higher than the other two groups. Finally, we expected that the sailing school sailor would most enjoy the aesthetic experiences of sailing, but there were no significant differences between the three groups on this measure.

Sailing commitment. Lastly, the results did not support the prediction that the three groups would not differ in sailing commitment. Table 1 shows that the yacht club groups felt a significantly stronger degree of commitment to sailing, and had significantly more friends and relatives who sailed than the boat show or sailing school respondents. The boat show and sailing school boaters did not differ in their commitment to sailing and did not differ in their social networks tied to sailing.

The Self-Development Approach to Specialization

Table 2 offers support for the single continuum approach to sailing specialization. Most of the socioeconomic indicators and all but two of the specialization indicators differed significantly in the hypothesized direction across the five categories. Those people who do not own boats, have never taking sailing lessons, and do not belong to a yacht club (i.e., those who only boat with friends) typically scored the lowest on all of the indicators. Conversely those who owned a boat, have taken sailing lessons, and belong to a yacht club typically scored the highest on all the indicators. The boat show, sailing school, and sailing school/boat owner categories generally fell in between the extremes in a roughly ascending order, although the differences were not always significant between the three. Moreover, as people lose interest and either sell their boat and/or let their yacht club membership lapse, their scores characteristically fell off from the peak.

Socioeconomic differences. Comparisons among socioeconomic indicators partially supported the continuum hypothesis. Table 2 shows that greater involvement in sailing increases with age. Those who only sail with friends tend to be the youngest in the sample (43.6 years old) while those who owned boats, had taken sailing lessons, and belonged to a yacht club were 54.5 years old. Income followed a similar pattern. Those who only sailed with friends on average had a household income of $54,000. The people who owned a boat, had taken sailing lessons, and belonged to a yacht club had the highest incomes at an average of $68,000 a year. Waning interest in sailing was often tied to socioeconomic constraints (Table 2). Those who sold their boats and/or let their yacht club memberships lapse were, on average, younger than the expert sailor, had smaller household incomes than the expert sailor, and tended to be employed in lower status occupations.

Sailing experience and frequency of participation. Sailing experience and frequency of participation followed the same patterns (Table 2). The people who only sail with their friends reported the lowest scores on each of the four indicators. Conversely the expert sailor who owned his/her boat, had

TABLE 2

Comparison of Single Sailing Specialization Continuum by Socioeconomic and Specialization Indicators.

	Boat With Friends (n = 107)	Boat Show (n = 52)	Sailing School (n = 32)	School and Owner (n = 42)	Yacht Club (n = 48)	Former Club Or Owner (n = 36)	Former Boater (n = 37)	F	p	MEAN
SOCIOECONOMIC										
Age	43.6_{a}	47.3_{a}	43.7_{a}	49.3_{ab}	54.5_{b}	49.1_{ab}	47.1_{ab}	5.12	.00	47.2
Education	14.2	13.8	14.4	14.1	14.3	14.0	14.0	1.26	ns	14.1
Income	54.2_{ab}	60.9_{ab}	55.1_{ab}	58.2_{ab}	68.0_{b}	65.5_{b}	45.6_{a}	1.99	.06	57.9
Occupation	3.05	3.25	3.15	2.97	3.27	3.13	2.91	.81	ns	3.10
SAILING EXPERIENCE										
Years exp.	19.9_{a}	23.4_{ab}	24.8_{ab}	24.5_{ab}	27.9_{b}	24.8_{ab}	24.4_{ab}	3.45	.00	23.4
Sail regularity	3.21_{a}	4.19_{bc}	3.68_{ab}	4.40_{bcd}	4.85_{d}	4.55_{cd}	3.89_{ac}	14.09	.00	3.97
Typical trips	7.5_{a}	14.6_{ab}	12.3_{ab}	16.9_{b}	35.9_{c}	22.7_{b}	8.7_{ab}	26.00	.00	15.63
Skill	2.59_{a}	3.44_{b}	3.00_{ab}	3.54_{bc}	4.00_{c}	3.75_{bc}	3.45_{bc}	17.48	.00	3.26
SPECIALIZED SAILING BEHAVIORS										
Racing	$-.83_{a}$	-1.05_{a}	$-.29_{ab}$	$-.05_{ab}$	1.09_{b}	1.96_{b}	$.87_{b}$	8.67	.00	.00
Ocean cruising	$.86_{a}$	$.98_{ab}$	1.31_{abc}	1.04_{ab}	1.68_{b}	1.52_{ab}	1.02_{ab}	2.46	.02	1.14
Overnight sail.	6.4_{a}	10.1_{b}	11.9_{abc}	12.6_{b}	18.0_{c}	12.8_{bc}	13.4_{bc}	12.86	.00	11.2
EVALUATIONS OF THE SAILING EXPERIENCE										
Sail environ.	14.5	14.6	16.8	15.7	16.4	16.1	15.7	1.71	ns	15.4
Boat orientation	13.5_{a}	15.2_{b}	14.0_{ab}	16.2_{bc}	17.2_{c}	15.6_{bc}	15.6_{bc}	13.03	.00	15.1
Aesthetic exp.	21.8_{a}	22.1_{ab}	21.7_{ab}	22.2_{ab}	23.1_{b}	22.3_{ab}	22.1_{ab}	2.36	.02	22.1
SAILING COMMITMENT										
Intensive	-2.70_{a}	$.16_{b}$	$.28_{b}$	1.05_{b}	4.04_{c}	1.45_{b}	$-.49_{ab}$	22.57	.00	.00
Extensive	-1.33_{a}	$-.10_{b}$	$-.25_{ab}$	$.56_{b}$	2.38_{c}	$.87_{b}$	$-.34_{ab}$	22.98	.00	.00

Note. Subscripts indicate between-group differences significant at the .05 level based on a Tamhane T2 difference test.

taken sailing lessons, and belonged to a yacht club reported the highest score on each of the 4 indicators. These expert sailors had more years of sailing experience, boated more regularly, took more annual trips, and reported higher levels of sailing skill than people in the other six groups. The boat show, sailing school, and school/owner combination groups once again fell between the extremes. Finally, the boaters who were losing interest in sailing again reported diminishing scores from the peak.

Specialized boating behaviors. The specialized boating behavior results also supported the specialization continuum (Table 2). The novice sailor scored the lowest on open-water cruising and leisurely overnight sailing. Conversely, the expert sailor who owns a boat, has taken sailing lessons, and who belongs to a yacht club scored the highest on these two indicators. Those groups losing interest in sailing reported diminishing scores from the expert score. Sailboat racing was a little different. The boat show sailor was the least likely to race his or her boat. Those most likely to race were the ones who had either sold their boat or let their yacht club membership lapse.

Evaluations of the sailing experience. Comparisons of experience evaluations supported the specialization continuum. The novice sailor scored the lowest on each of the three indicators, while the expert who owned a boat, had taken sailing lessons, and belonged to a yacht club scored the highest on each of the three indicators. The sailing school participant scored the highest on the sailing environment indicator ("being heeled over in a high wind," etc.) and scored low on the boat orientation indicator ("puttering and keeping my boat ship shape," etc.). Those whose participation was waning also showed diminishing scores on each of the three sailing evaluation indicators.

Sailing commitment. Finally, the sailing commitment scores provide perhaps the strongest evidence for the continuum hypothesis. Table 2 shows that the novice who only boats with friends had the weakest emotional attachment to sailing and had the fewest friends who also sail. The expert sailor who owns a boat, has taken sailing lessons, and who belongs to a yacht club reported the highest levels of sailing attachment and the most sailing friends. Each of the intermediate categories reported scores distributed between the extremes, and the two groups who were losing interest in sailing reported decreasing scores in each of the 3 commitment variables.

Discussion

These data from Apostle Islands sailors did not support Aversa's theoretical framework and did not support the argument that there are multiple expressions of sailing specialization. One reason these data did not support Aversa's model may be related to the sampling location. Aversa developed his framework through participant observation at sites along the Northeast coast of the United States. Social status may play a more pronounced role in a region where sailing as a leisure activity originated. These Apostle Islands data come from sailors at a relatively new sailing destination in the Midwest

United States, which may have become popular only because of fiberglass technology. These results should be replicated at older, more established facilities on the east and west coast before ruling out the influence of social status on sailing specialization.

The findings from this study failed to support the social context framework in three ways. First, the results showed that membership in the three categories was not related to social status. This finding is consistent with Kelly's (1975) warning against social status as a way of explaining leisure participation. The boat show people were not the middle class/blue collar type of individual who only recently had the means to purchase the fiberglass hull technology of contemporary sailboat manufacturing. Neither was the yacht club member the upper class business executive. There were no significant differences on any of the socioeconomic variables between the three categories.These findings suggest that sailing school experiences and yacht club memberships may be open to broader segments of society in the same way that boat ownership is open to broader segments of society because of fiberglass technology.

Consequently, even though Aversa's framework groups yacht clubs into one functional category, there may be a range of services offered by different clubs that cater to different interests and economic resources of the sailing population. For example, some yacht clubs may offer minimal services like storage, boat slips/mooring, and food service, while others may offer a full range of services such as sailing instruction, rentals, and regattas. Moreover, the bareboat chartering business is probably not limited to white collar professionals who are sailing school graduates who do not own boats. Boat owners and yacht club members from Chicago, for example, may be just as likely to charter boats at the Apostle Islands because it may be cost-prohibitive to transport one's 28' yacht 9 hours north. It may also be time-prohibitive to sail one's boat the length of Lake Michigan, along Lake Huron to the Sault St. Marie locks, and then across Lake Superior.

Second, the 3-category typology may not be a very inclusive framework of sailing socialization and sailing experiences. The framework excluded a substantial number of Apostle Islands sailors (107 people or almost a third of the sample), and therefore excluded an important socialization method into sailing: initial participation with friends who own a boat. Moreover, the theoretical boundaries between the framework's three categories may be artificially rigid. These data suggest, however, that entry into sailing participation through the sailing school venue does not preclude boat ownership or yacht club membership. Similarly, entry into sailing participation through the boat show venue does not stop one from taking a sailing class or joining a yacht club.

Third, comparisons between the boat show, sailing school, and yacht club categories did not offer evidence for distinct styles of sailing participation. Instead, yacht club membership provided an institutional framework that facilitated more active sailing involvement and development. The boat show and sailing school boaters were almost indistinguishable in their re-

sponses to the specialization variables. The two groups did not differ on any of the 16 comparisons. Where there were significant differences between the groups, the yacht club sailor scored the highest on all comparisons. Yacht club members do race more than others as predicted. Nevertheless, yacht club members participate more regularly, participate more frequently, and rate their sailing skill higher (Table 1). They also are most strongly committed and have the most sailing friends. Thus, those who are seeking the highest degree of involvement in sailing would seek the institutional arrangement that a yacht club offers. This enables them to become more involved and more specialized in sailing. Instead of participating in a distinct style of sailing, yacht club sailors "did it all," did it more often, and took it more seriously than the other groups. Yacht club membership was the result of one's passion for sailing rather than one's social standing.

The data offer more evidence to support a single continuum approach to specialization, with yacht membership constituting the pinnacle. Those boaters who owned a boat, had taken sailing lessons, and belonged to a yacht club scored the highest on 11 out of 12 indicators where significant differences were found. The data also shows a progression of scores. People who only boat with friends or associates scored the lowest on all specialization variables. The next lowest were generally the sailing school people, followed by the boat show sailors, and then the boat owners and sailing school people. This suggests that a person may first be introduced to sailing by a friend or relative and then follow up a successful experience by taking sailing lessons. Once one gains confidence as a skipper, the person may next purchase a boat. As boat owners, one's skill and commitment may grow, and that person may next purchase membership in a yacht club to facilitate more involvement and specialization in sailing. This continuum notion is strengthened by the findings that a person's frequency of participation, positive evaluation of sailing, and commitment to sailing diminish as an individual loses interest. If one sells one's boat or drops his or her yacht club membership, the individual's scores on all the specialization indicators drop. Of course, this developmental progression is an idealized scenario and is perhaps never played out in such an orderly way. Nevertheless, the data show a pattern of increasing involvement, and subsequent decreasing involvement, in sailing across stages of participation.

These data do not suggest that one's social context was unrelated to boating participation. Boating specialization was related to age, offering some support for Kelly's (1983) life-course approach. The youngest people in the sample were those who either boated only with friends or those who had only taken sailing lessons. This suggests that these may be people who are still in the process of developing a career and have neither the time nor the resources to purchase or maintain a boat. Aversa maintains that the success of the chartering industry comes from this time-strapped professional in the early stages of career development. This individual is more likely to take advantage of a chartering service because it allows one to take short-duration sailing cruises to exotic locations and not be tied down with boat

ownership, storage, maintenance, or transportation. There was also an income constraint on sailing. Those sailors who had both sold their boats and let their yacht club memberships lapse had lower incomes. This group may be partially comprised of young professionals who may have over-extended themselves financially earlier in their careers, and have been forced to reassess their sailing involvement. Therefore, while the social context may have been a constraint to sailing participation, the data show that the social context did not dictate alternate styles of participation and alternate routes to sailing specialization.

This paper has compared two ways of thinking about the process of recreation specialization. The evidence supports the developmental continuum perspective over the social context framework implied by Aversa's model of sailing socialization. The data showed a singular trajectory or progression from novice to expert. Sailors may prefer one style of sailing over another, but the differences between a casual day cruiser, a leisurely overnight sailor, a long-range cruiser, and a racer are not rigid. Moreover, social status had little bearing on the predominant style of sailing that one chooses. People from differing socioeconomic positions participate in the full range of sailing activities and sailing styles. Day cruisers are not just blue-collar laborers and long-range cruisers are not just eccentric college professors. Neither are racers the upper class business executives. Sailing no longer appears to be a status-based leisure phenomenon.

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