

## Robert Johnson

### Pathological interest

#### 1. *Meaning and location in Kant's works*

Kant uses 'pathological' as a synonym for 'dependent on our sensuous natures' or stemming from **inclination**, and hence containing a feeling of pleasure. A pathological interest is thus a condition dependent on our sensuous natures under which a given **faculty**—such as the will—is exercised. The term is found throughout his practical works.

Robert N. Johnson 3/22/08 6:48 AM

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#### 2. *Related keywords in Kant's work*

Fakultät, Interesse, Interesse der Sittlichkeit, Interesse der Neigung, Neigung

#### 3. *Philosophical function in Kant's philosophy*

To contemporary ears, 'pathological' suggests something dangerously irrational, as if our sensuous natures were deranged and only held in check by reason. This is not Kant's meaning. One reason for his terminology may be that the pleasures that are the condition under which we form the desires we act on are *prior* to reason. 5:117 Hence, pathological interests are interests containing a condition that exists prior to reasoning for the exercise of some faculty, typically, the **will**.

Robert N. Johnson 3/22/08 6:50 AM

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