

**The Scientific Design of Sarah Grand's Short Story Collection
Our Manifold Nature (1894)**

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<1>Sarah Grand (1854-1943) is an Anglo-Irish writer of novels and short stories whose success reached its peak during the *fin de siècle* with novels such as *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) and *The Beth Book* (1897). As has been demonstrated by various literary critics,⁽¹⁾ Sarah Grand deployed the discourse of scientific theories such as Darwinism and evolutionary psychology to advocate her feminist ideas. However, most critics have focused on Grand's novels to illustrate her involvement in nineteenth-century scientific discourse. Yet Grand was also a very prolific writer of short stories, which were published in periodicals throughout the 1890s. An analysis of these stories might enrich the discussion of the scientific touches in Grand's fiction.

<2>Grand's persistent assimilation of scientific ideas and theories was induced by the authority that science had acquired at the time the *fin de siècle*. By the end of the nineteenth century, essays, speeches, and books by influential scientists had replaced theological explanations of the natural world with scientific naturalism (Ledger and Luckhurst²²¹). Grand used the authority of science to establish her feminist ideas. During her lifetime, she had easy access to the newest scientific ideas, not least because she was married to an army surgeon, which, as noted by Ann Heilmann, gave her unlimited access to medical books (²⁷). Moreover, during the *fin de siècle*, it was not unusual for scientific essays to be published in popular periodicals, alongside short stories and socio-political articles about the woman question or class inequality. Precisely because short stories could respond quickly to current issues and debates, the stories Grand published in periodicals seem particularly suited to investigate her appropriation of the up-and-coming scientific discourses.

<3>This essay sets out to analyze the short stories by Grand that are most explicitly informed by scientific theories, that is, 'Janey, a Humble Administrator' (1891), 'Kane, a Soldier Servant' (1891), 'Boomellen' (1892), 'The Yellow Leaf' (1893) and 'Eugenia' (1893). These stories were published in periodicals and later collected in Grand's first volume *Our Manifold Nature* (1894). The essay particularly aims to investigate how Grand's scientific stance reverberates in the formal aspects of the stories, such as their narrative mode.

Grand's Scientific Point of View

<4>The title of Grand's 1894 collection, *Our Manifold Nature*, seems to anticipate a non-fictional, scientific and comprehensive study of the natural world and therefore it already signals Grand's adoption of the objective and all-knowing point of view of scientists. The short story 'Eugenia', first published in *Temple Bar* (1893), immediately confirms the scientific propensity of the collection title, as the female narrator opens the story as follows:

I am a humble artist, studying always in the life school of the world, blinking nothing that goes to the making or marring of life, more especially to the marring of it, for if we would make it lovely, we must know exactly the nature of the diseases that disfigure it, and experiment upon them until we discover the great specific which, when properly applied, shall remedy all that. And it so happened that, in order to be accurate in every detail of a work upon which I was then engaged, I required to study human nature (1).

The phrases 'studying', 'know exactly', 'experiment', and 'accuracy of detail' inscribe the narrator into the practice of science and suggest reliability and authority. Moreover, the introduction is dispersed with medicinal discourse, as the narrator sets out to "remedy the diseases of life". The apologetic "humble" in the first sentence thus expresses mere false modesty, a rhetorical topos common to self-conscious authoritative narrators. With the emphasis on the word humble, Grand also hints at the modest stance that is expected of female narrators. That is, it has traditionally been the privilege of male narrators to take up an authoritative position.(2) Significantly, the first paragraphs of 'Eugenia' do not explicitly reveal the narrator's sex. By posing as gender-neutral, the narrator validates her all-knowing perspective and tries to gain the reader's confidence. The beginning of 'Eugenia' thus demonstrates Grand's feminist appropriation of scientific authority. Further, in the story 'Janey, a Humble Administrator', the female first-person narrator conceives of her eponymous heroine as a scientific object: "She was one of the best specimens I ever met of that highly complex nature" (148). Later, the narrator presents herself as a "student of human nature" (149), which echoes the learned introduction of 'Eugenia'. In a nutshell, Grand deploys the authoritative discourse of science in order to have her progressive feminist thought more readily accepted.

<5>The story that most explicitly interacts with the scientific discourses of the *fin de siècle* is the novella 'The Yellow Leaf'. Before its publication in *Our Manifold Nature*, it was serialized over three issues of *Pall Mall Magazine* (1893) as 'The Sere, the Yellow Leaf', with the subtitle 'A Study from Life'. The word "study" again announces Grand's scientific approach. The same issues of *Pall Mall Magazine* contained scientifically inspired articles on, for example, Japanese tribes(3) and the Jewish question.(4) With 'The Yellow Leaf', Grand adds her voice to the evolutionary discourses among which her novella was published. The story is divided into two parts and features a first-person female narrator who reminisces about her visits to her aunt Lady Marsh. The first part describes the events at Lady Marsh's mansion when the narrator was a fifteen-year old girl. Lady Marsh is a strong advocate of traditional Victorian womanly virtues, and accordingly discourages the narrator's intellectual pursuits, inciting her to focus on appearance and manners instead: "she considered it the beginning of wisdom for a woman to make herself attractive" (90). During her stay at Lady Marsh's house, the narrator meets two girls of the same age, Adalesa and Evangeline. As Lady Marsh's daughter, Evangeline has clearly been raised according to the Victorian standards of femininity, whereas Adalesa is a New Woman

character who rebels against Lady Marsh's conservative standpoints. The narrator gradually comes to favor Adalesa's point of view. The second part of the story is set years later, but still before the time of the narration. It describes how the three women meet again as adults at the mansion of Lady Marsh.

Selectors and Selected

<6>In the first part of 'The Yellow Leaf', Lady Marsh burdens the young narrator with anti-feminist generalizations concerning the relationship between the sexes: "A girl with a very gentle, rather timid manner is irresistible to most men. Men like women to be dependent and clinging" (91). Lady Marsh's emphasis on the importance of women's beauty and passivity is inspired by Darwinian discourse. That is, nineteenth century constructions of sexual difference relied heavily on scientific discourses, many of which stemmed from Darwin's theory of sexual selection, developed in *The Descent of Man* (1871). Darwin endows the male sex with the agency of sexual selection: "Man is more powerful in body and mind than woman...therefore it is not surprising that he should have gained the power of selection" (911). Darwin's disciples concluded that, as woman's bodily and mental power is inferior to that of man, her natural function is to remain passive and to satisfy men's ideal of beauty in order to be selected. As Angelique Richardson explains, "male aesthetic preference had gained the upper hand and, among the 'civilized', aesthetic principles overruled physical strength" (239). This particular claim of Darwinian discourse is identified in *Evangeline*, whose attitude sets off the narrator's disapproval: "beyond...the constant care and thought she bestowed upon her dress and appearance, she did not seem to have any special interest in life" ('Yellow Leaf' 128).

<7>Further, near the end of the story's first part, the narrator describes how a young man named Perceval arrives at the mansion of Lady Marsh. Perceval 'selects' the womanly and beautiful *Evangeline* over the less conventional Adalesa, which almost illustrates Darwin's theory of sexual selection. Yet the narrator's wariness of Perceval's choice and of the aesthetic principle of sexual selection emerges in the following excerpt: "*Evangeline* might, as her mother maintained, be a poem in appearance, but Adalesa was one in fact in spite of her angles. This ordinary young man, with only an ideal of fleshy perfection in his mind and before his eyes, was not likely to suspect it" (99). The narrator's commentary adds an ironic tinge to the young man's chivalric name. Throughout the first part of the story, the narrator already makes plain that she is not in favor of women's passivity and the exclusive attention to external appearance.

<8>In the story 'Eugenia', the Darwinian principles of sexual selection are more radically subverted. The female protagonist of the story, Eugenia, rejects a man's courtship and instead selects a marital partner herself. Grand thus reverses the gendered division of selector and selected. In support of this reversal, Grand deploys the late nineteenth-century theory of eugenics. Eugenics has its roots in Darwin's evolutionary theory, but its principles are far removed from Darwin's ideas. Eugenic scientists gained many adherents at the time of the *fin de siècle*, when political and economic instability nourished the Victorians' fear of racial decline and degeneration. Among the supporters of eugenic thought were also many feminist thinkers. As Sally Ledger argues, "discussions about women's role as mothers became entangled with

discourses on racial purity and strength" (162). Hence, eugenics offered women a way of obtaining agency and political power through their reproductive function.

<9>Part of the practice of eugenicists was to link moral qualities to physical attributes (Richardson 238). The narrator of 'Eugenia' participates in the moral reading of external features when she describes her protagonist, whose name already announces eugenic fitness:

One could not help calculating what the nerve-power must be behind such ease, and what the strength of the sinews which were masked by her ivory skin...Her ripe red lips were slightly parted in a smile showing the white teeth between...one could trace the course of the blue veins beneath the transparent skin (26).

Beauty and moral strength are subtly interwoven in the association of ivory skin with strong sinews, and in the link between transparent skin and healthy blood. On the other hand, Eugenia's suitor Brinkhampton is represented as a degenerate figure, again by linking external appearance to moral qualities:

no care could conceal the 'used-up' look about his eyes, nor produce a deceptive tinge of health on the opaque sallow of his cheeks...it is only a fresh and healthy skin that really takes paint and powder well...a casual acquaintance would never have expected flabby muscular tissue discounted by alcohol (6).

Brinkhampton's "discounted" constitution is brought about by alcohol, which is suggestive of immoral behaviour. In addition, Brinkhampton's degeneracy is linked to his decadent personality, which evokes the theories of Max Nordau and his disciples, who considered decadence and aestheticism to be the most important causes of racial decline. In his study *Degeneration* (1895), Nordau states that "in the tastes and aesthetic instincts of fashionable society, [there is] the confluence of two well-defined conditions of disease...viz. degeneration and hysteria" (15). Brinkhampton's sole interests are diamonds, fashion and society, which bears out his decadent artificiality. Eugenia shows her awareness of this when they go horse-riding together: "But let us hope he has forgotten to provide himself with the last thing in driving gloves. He would never use anything already out of date by a season" ('Eugenia' 25). In sum, Eugenia's eugenic fitness justifies her agency in the marital selection process. Not the degenerate Brinkhampton, but the fit Eugenia can secure the advancement of the race. The narrator states: "with such women for the mothers of men, the English-speaking races should rule the world" (21). Eugenia's control over the reproduction process endows her with political and imperial power.

<10>Eugenic references abound in the short stories of *Our Manifold Nature*. The story 'Boomellen' for example, which appeared in *Temple Bar* in 1892, defines its eponymous protagonist in terms of his genealogical background:

Boomellen had arrived at the weary end of his ancestry, being the last male representative and heir of two used-up races. His father had been 'wild' in his youth, but his degrading habits were cut short by something which suspiciously resembled epilepsy. He then married...the girl he chose being herself the daughter of a drunken father and an arrogant,

nervous, irritable self-indulgent mother. The consequences of this combination in Boomellen's mother were markedly neurotic (185).

The narrator of 'Boomellen' adheres to the eugenic practice of conflating conditions such as epilepsy with moral decline. Like eugenicists, the narrator considers moral and physical health to be hereditary. So, Boomellen's disposition is determined by his degenerate ancestral background. The persistent attention to genealogy was instigated by eugenic scientists such as Francis Galton, who advocated systematic research into the hereditary background of English families in order to find the races that were fittest and thus best qualified for reproduction (332). In sum, Grand appropriates the discourse and logic of Darwinism and eugenics, often to the advantage of her New Woman characters. The next section will focus on that other important heir of Darwinian theory: evolutionary psychology.

Woman's Mind and Education

<11> Darwinian ideas were fundamental to evolutionary psychology, the up-and-coming science of the second half of the nineteenth century. Interpreting physiological traits as indexes of mental capacity, many Victorian evolutionary psychologists concluded that there was not only a physical, but also a mental difference between the sexes. In his article 'Mental Differences between Men and Women' (1887), the scientist George Romanes states that women have inferior intellectual power as their brain weight is lighter. In addition, Romanes concludes that women's weaker physique is "less able to sustain the fatigue of serious or prolonged brain action" (655). What is more, the theories of evolutionary psychologists informed *fin de siècle* arguments against equal educational opportunities for women. Henry Maudsley's article 'Sex in Mind and in Education' (1874) alleges that "women are marked out by nature for very different offices in life from those of men, and...the healthy performance of her special functions renders it improbable she will succeed, and unwise for her to persevere, in running over the same course at the same pace with him" (468). According to Maudsley, woman's pursuit of man's education will "injure" her health and hamper her reproductive mission (468). As Patricia Murphy concludes, in linking bodily difference to mental difference, conservative thinkers used Darwinism to argue that improving educational opportunities for women was unnatural and a threat to the advancement of the race (221).

<12> The theories of evolutionary psychologists reverberate in the story 'The Yellow Leaf', yet their anti-feminist bias is subtly subverted. First of all, the characters frequently participate in the evolutionary psychologists' practice of linking physical features to mental traits. Cynthia Eagle Russett has argued that Victorian scientists adhered to physiological determinism, which means that in Victorian times, "one's destiny was written in one's skull" (19). Victorian scientists considered facial angles an important index of mental capacity (32). Forward jaws, like those of monkeys, were associated with stupidity and primitivism, while more straight or vertical profiles indicated superiority (32). Adalesa's description of her looks echoes this idea: "I want to study man, and he only shows himself to short frocks...But I'll find him out! My angles fit me for the task. Thank god for my angles! No man who looks at me will think of me as a young lady, that most awful of human weaknesses" ('Yellow Leaf' 61). Adalesa's reference to angles thus receives extra weight here as 'angles' is a key term in the scientific jargon of the late nineteenth century.

The verb 'fit' has a similar subtext. However, in ascribing fitness and superior or unwomanly angles to a woman, the text turns scientific discourse into the advantage of woman. Another allusion to scientific deductions based on the form of the skull surfaces later in the story, when Adalesa discusses equality with Lady Marsh:

'Take Care!' Lady Marsh said to Mr. Vincent playfully. 'That dear child there,' -meaning Adalesa- 'claims equality with you.'

'Oh for heaven's sake - pardon me,' Adalesa cried, with more than necessary emphasis, after a horrified glance at the young man's sloping skull- 'not equality, I could never come to that!' (129).

Evolutionary psychologists argued that the female mind was the lesser developed and thus inferior to that of men. However, Adalesa inverts this gender hierarchy by suggesting that she is mentally superior to Mr. Vincent, a visitor of Lady Marsh. She does so by twisting the meaning of the term 'equality'. At the same time, the narrator almost incidentally refers to the sloping skull of Mr. Vincent, a sign of inferiority according to nineteenth century scientists. The narrator thus appropriates and subverts the scientific practice of physiological determinism by associating the man's skull with inferiority. Further, when Adalesa orders a coachman to give her the reins of the carriage that will take her to Lady Marsh, she realizes that her request is unusual: "any one meeting the carriage, and seeing you and me on the box, driving the servants, might have mistaken us for a travelling lunatic asylum" (58). The metaphor of the lunatic asylum is inspired by late-nineteenth century scientific discourses that pathologize women's opposition to their imposed roles.

<13>Further, diverging opinions on women's education are articulated in 'The Yellow Leaf', which again directly or indirectly refer to the theories of evolutionary psychologists such as Maudsley and Romanes. According to Lady Marsh, a girl's education should solely be concerned with her outward appearance: "I know, for a fact, that if you bring up a girl to be a beauty, she will develop into one" (91). She repeatedly shows herself an adversary of women's intellectual pursuits: "a young girl's brain must suffer if she studies subjects only fit for men" (89). Lady Marsh's argument against equal education is thus similar to that of Romanes and Maudsley. She even draws on Maudsley's terminology when she convinces the girls to break off their study of mathematics: "you know, dear, they are not womanly pursuits. You will not be fit for the duties of wife and mother by-and-by if you injure your constitution now" (73). The words 'fit', 'injure', and 'constitution' show that the discourse on women's education is drenched in the thought of evolutionary psychology. Contrary to Lady Marsh, Adalesa and the narrator are totally supportive of equal education. The following excerpt renders the narrator's explicit reflections on the question of sex in education:

I felt there was something wrong somewhere, for I could not see sex in a subject of study. Why should one be masculine and another feminine? surely there is no sex in mind? The question of what we shall be taught should be answered by finding out for us what we have the ability to learn. If a boy has a genius for cooking and a girl the faculty for medicine, he

must be a sorry educator who takes pains to pervert either of them from their natural bent (75).

With the phrase "their natural bent," the narrator subverts the naturalization of women's passivity and mental inferiority. The literal reiteration of Maudsley's article title in the sentence "surely there is no *sex in mind*" (emphasis added) might or might not prove that Grand had read Maudsley's article, but at any rate it shows that scientific discourse had filtered through *fin de siècle* debates far beyond the scientific world.

<14>Throughout the first part of the story, the narrator continues to challenge traditional presumptions about women's intellect. When Evangeline suffers from pain in her arm, a famous physician visits the girls at Lady Marsh's mansion:

It was evident that the old gentleman was interested in his charming patient, his manners, which were naturally suave, took on such an obviously extra shade of delicate, courtly consideration. Standing a little apart with Adalesa, I became deeply interested in his method of inquiring into the case of the trouble; but he talked about "the long bone of the arm" until at last, bored by the repetition, I ventured to vary the monotony for him by suggesting the word humerus aside to her. The doctor overheard me, however. "Oh-hem-ha-yes," he observed deliberately, giving me to understand at the same time, with a look, that I had sunk low in his estimation (88).

The female narrator shows her mastery of the discourse of medicine, which is considered to be a masculine privilege. The doctor is clearly unsettled by the narrator's interruption, as it undoes the authority and power that he obtains from knowledge. By contrast, Evangeline's attitude does sustain his superiority, and the phrases "charming patient" and "courtly consideration" almost eroticize the doctor's encounter with his patient. This is indicative of the patriarchal bias that is ingrained in the Victorian medicinal practice. Lady Marsh too points out that the narrator has made a mistake in interrupting the doctor: "You see, any indelicacy in a young lady shocks a refined and cultivated man" (88). Yet the narrator responds: "But is it really more delicate to call it the long bone of the arm?" (88). Indeed, she subverts Lady Marsh's criticism by appropriating her term 'delicacy'. The narrator gives the Victorian womanly virtue of delicacy a feminist twist by suggesting that it is not ignorance, but knowledge that generates delicacy. In showing the narrator's appropriation of medicinal discourse and the ensuing negative responses of the doctor and Lady Marsh, Grand explicitly thematizes her own unwanted interference in the scientific debates of her time.

<15>In the second part of the story, the narrator and Adalesa are proven right in having disagreed with Lady Marsh's ideas on womanhood and education. Both girls return to Lady Marsh as successful grown-up women: the narrator a well-known author, and Adalesa a beautiful duchess. The contrast with Evangeline could not be more striking, for the narrator describes her as follows: "the simplicity which had been winsome at eighteen seemed silliness now, and the little moves and attitudes she still affected sat incongruously upon her altered looks" (118-119). Evangeline has assimilated her role as aesthetic object, encouraged by her mother's education. But now that she has grown older, the youthful beauty of her appearance has faded. Evangeline

laments: "But what is there to live for, if you cease to be attractive?" (139). Her main source of identity, being attractive to men, has disappeared. It also appears that it is Evangeline's constitution that has been injured rather than that of Adalesa or the narrator. Evangeline looks like a wreck and she is burdened by her nerves: " 'My drops!' Evangeline exclaimed. 'I am obliged to take something. The doctor prescribed them for my nerves: I can't trust my nerves; I can't keep up without something' " (131). Clearly, Evangeline's limited and womanly education has on the long term only brought about disadvantages.

<16>'The Yellow Leaf' ends with the suicide of Evangeline. Her dead body mimics her status as an aesthetic commodity:

The blinds were up, and the summer sun exposed the scene, touching with tawdriness what the moon would have enriched...There was a large luxurious coach near the window; and there, still in her ball dress and her jewels, lit by the full blaze of day, she lay prone, with eyes half-shut and lips drawn back in a dreadful grin. She had many more jewels on than she had worn at the ball the night before; and I was seized with the horrid suspicion that the ball dress had been kept on for effect, and the extra diamonds added to complete the picture (144).

The phrases "the blinds were up" and "the summer sun exposed the scene" suggest the theatricality of Evangeline's suicide. This theatricality is an extension of the commodified femininity that she has assimilated. The intentionally added jewels and the ball dress further confirm the sense of theatricality and suggest that Evangeline herself might have realized the detrimental effects of Victorian norms of femininity. The scene also evokes the setup of a painting, for which the nearby window functions as a frame. The sun functions as a spotlight that is focused on Evangeline, who is posing as an aesthetic spectacle.

<17>In 'The Yellow Leaf', Grand contests the Victorian belief that improving women's educational opportunities is unnatural. She does so by using scientific reasoning and discourse to her own purpose, both in the portrayal of the characters and in the story's teleology. The narrator's arguments for women's study of 'masculine' subjects are sustained by the story's ending. Whereas the narrator and Adalesa have ended up happy and successful, Evangeline has degenerated. Grand thus rejects the anti-feminist bias of evolutionary psychology.

Minding the Lower Classes

<18>The short stories that have been discussed so far all involved narrators and characters of the higher classes. *Our Manifold Nature* also contains two stories that render sympathetic portraits of working-class people, that is, 'Kane, a Soldier Servant' and 'Janey, a Humble Administrator'. In both stories, a middle-class, female first-person narrator tells the story of a lower-class character. As the titles of the stories already indicate, the eponymous protagonists Kane and Janey are exclusively identified by their lower-class positions. 'Kane, a Soldier Servant' was first published in the literary magazine *Temple Bar* (1891). The title character is a former soldier whom the narrator employs as a servant in her middle-class household. Though the narrator values Kane's loyalty, she is eventually forced to fire him for his idleness. Kane subsequently disappears from

the narrator's view. However, meeting him again years later, she discovers that he has married an abused woman in order to give her and her children a better life. Though the narrator portrays Kane as admirable and noble, she takes on a distant and superior pose towards him, especially in the opening paragraphs of the story:

His real name was Keen, but Cain he mispronounced it, being of Irish blood; and Society, reluctant to brand him with the accursed appellation of Adam's eldest son, compromised the matter by spelling it Kane. And Kane he remained to us all till the end of the chapter (204).

Not only is Kane of a lower class, his non-English background further marginalizes him from the political hegemony of the Victorian age. The word 'mispronounced' indicates that Kane's Irishness is considered a deviation from the narrator's norms. Later, she describes Kane as an "immoral old Irish reprobate, liar, drunkard..."(220), in which sentence 'Irish' again has a pejorative connotation. By giving him an English name, the narrator and 'Society' have obliterated Kane's Irish identity. Being in the first place concerned with controlling Kane's identity through his name, the narrator sets the tone for a detached and objectifying approach to her subject matter. The reference to 'chapter' further enlarges the distance between narrator and character, as it hints at the fictiveness of the story and thus dehumanizes Kane.

<19>What is more, the narrator's descriptions of Kane's appearance are often outright condescending: "His hair, innocent of parting, stood up on end all round his forehead, which was low, as it does in some monkeys" (204). The discourse of evolutionary psychology resonates in the reference to Kane's low skull, and the comparison with monkeys implies racial and cultural inferiority. In the imperial context of the nineteenth century, the Irish were more than once stereotyped as monkeys. Cartoons portraying the Irish as monkeys abounded in magazines such as *Punch*(5) and *Harper's Weekly*.(6) The cartoonists were inspired by the theories of contemporary (pseudo-)scientists such as John Beddoe, a racial theorist who claimed that the Irish had a more prognathous jaw (117), which connected them to a primitive, ape-like evolutionary stage. Later, the narrator indeed points to Kane's lesser developed mental capacities: "his powers of comprehension were purely emotional; it was through his senses that his brain was reached...Things beautiful delighted him as they do a child" ('Kane' 210). As Patricia Murphy has argued, evolutionary scientists considered sense perception and emotion lesser advanced faculties than cognition (224).

<20>In the vein of other stories that compile *Our Manifold Nature*, Grand's 1891 story 'Janey, a Humble Administrator' was first published in *Temple Bar*. The narrator is a lady who, in order to lift the boredom of her upper-middle-class existence, frequently visits the working-class household of Janey. Janey is a paralyzed young woman who is confined to her bed, but nevertheless miraculously manages to run the household all by herself, taking care of a baby, her siblings, her helpless mother and her mentally ill father. Though the narrator repeatedly expresses her admiration for Janey's courage and kindness, she still looks at Janey's working-class milieu from a distance. This already appears from the story's introduction: "How it happened that Janey could ever have lived and not been in Dickens, I cannot imagine" (148). The narrator connects herself to the master-narrator Dickens and thereby establishes her superior position towards her lower-class character. She explicitly differentiates herself from Janey: "But although I maintain

that Janey was a gentlewoman, it would be misleading to call her a lady" (148). In spite of her admirable qualities, Janey has no hope of rising above her working-class origins. First, her paralysis can never be cured completely, which turns out to be her mother's responsibility. After Janey got paralyzed, her mother put her in too small a bed, thereby letting her legs contract beyond repair. Second, Janey dies rather unexpectedly in the end of the story, after being struck down by her confused father. The mother's ignorance and the father's mental disarray are the result of their working-class living conditions, which thus indirectly bring Janey down as well. This confirms the story's adherence to a deterministic conception of class. The only person who is rewarded in the end is the narrator herself, whose conversations with Janey have made her a better woman.

<21>According to Murphy, evolutionary psychology "was grounded in the belief that male - specifically a white, higher-class European male, represented the pinnacle of the evolutionary process" (222). Having subverted the male bias of evolutionary psychology, Grand still seems to believe in the superiority of the higher classes and the English race. Grand critic Iveta Jusová comes to a similar conclusion about Grand's novels *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) and *The Beth Book* (1897): "the representations of the Irish and of the poor in the book are most of the time stereotypical and their cultural inferiority seems to be taken for granted" (309). Angelique Richardson also points to Grand's "class hostilities" and her "affinities with the racialized discourses which marked imperial Britain" (248). Yet as Sally Ledger indicates, in 'Eugenia', Eugenia chooses the lower-class, but eugenically 'fit' character Saxon Wake rather than the degenerate, upper-class Brinkhampton (162). The narrator makes clear that Saxon Wake has obtained a degree and was able to rise above his yeoman origins. 'Eugenia' thus bears out a more positive attitude towards the working classes.

<22>In conclusion, a scientific approach to the natural world permeates the short stories of Grand that were published in magazines and later collected in *Our Manifold Nature*. The analysis of the stories has demonstrated that Grand appropriates the concepts and logic of Darwinism, eugenics and evolutionary psychology both structurally and thematically. That is, her narrators seize the all-knowing and objective point of view of scientists and rely on scientific models for the development of their characters and narratives. More importantly, Grand subverts the anti-feminist bias inherent in the leading scientific theories of her time, by deploying the principles of Darwinian theory, eugenics and evolutionary psychology to empower women politically and intellectually. This empowerment however seems to be a privilege of middle-class English women, as the short stories tend to sustain the class and race bias of many late-nineteenth century scientific theories. Indeed, Grand uses scientific theories in a way that supports her own worldview. Through her short stories, Grand adds her voice to the debate about women's destinies that was held both in fictional texts and in non-fictional articles.

Endnotes

- (1)Murphy, P. 'Reevaluating female inferiority. Sarah Grand versus Charles Darwin.' *Victorian Literature and Culture* 26.2 (1998): 221-236. Richardson, A. 'The Eugenization of Love: Sarah Grand and the Morality of Genealogy.' *Victorian Studies* 42.2 (2000): 227-255. (^)
- (2)In 'The Lifted Veil: Women and Short Fiction in the 1880s and 1890s' (1996), Clare Hanson also focuses on women writers' strategic choice of male narrators in their short stories.(^)
- (3)Landor, A Henry Savage. "The Hairy Tribes of the Hokkaido" *The Pall Mall Magazine* 2.7 (1893): 106-122.(^)
- (4)Caine, Hall. "Russian Jewry" *The Pall Mall Magazine* 1.5 (1893): 641-655.(^)
- (5)Tenniel, Sir John. 'Rory of the Hills' *Punch* 58 (1870): 111.(^)
- (6)Nast, Thomas. 'The Ignorant Vote, Honors are Easy' *Harper's Weekly* December 9 (1876): cover.(^)

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---. Part Two. 'The Sere, the Yellow Leaf.' *Pall Mall Magazine* 1.6 (1893): 781-794. Print.

---. Part Three. 'The Sere, the Yellow Leaf.' *Pall Mall Magazine* 2.7 (1893): 27-48. Print.

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