



Seminar

ANN-CHARLOTTE GAVEL ADAMS

Fellow, SCAS.

Professor of Scandinavian Studies and Barbro Osher Endowed Chair of
Swedish Studies, University of Washington, Seattle

*'This Diary Must Never Be Published! This Is My Last Will!':
Scholarly and Ethical Considerations when Translating and
Publishing August Strindberg's Occult Diary*

Tuesday, 8 March, 11:15 a.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
www.swedishcollegium.se

S W E D I S H
C O L L E G I U M
for ADVANCED STUDY

ABOUT ANN-CHARLOTTE (LOTTA) GAVEL ADAMS

Ann-Charlotte Gavel Adams is Professor of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle, where she gives seminars on Nordic Drama and Film, and teaches courses on August Strindberg, Scandinavian Women Writers and Scandinavian Children's Literature. She also holds the Barbro Osher Endowed Chair of Swedish Studies at the University of Washington.

Gavel Adams began her doctoral studies in comparative literature at Stockholm University, but later moved to Seattle, where she received her Ph.D. from the University of Washington in 1990. Among her major publications are the bilingual (French and Swedish) editions of *Inferno* (volume 37) and *Legender* (volume 38) in the National Edition of August Strindberg's Collected Works. She has also compiled, edited and introduced two major volumes on *Twentieth-Century Swedish Writers, Before World War II* (2002) and *After World War II* (2002) in the series *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. In addition, she has published more than twenty scholarly articles on works by August Strindberg, Verner von Heidenstam, Fredrika Bremer and Astrid Lindgren.

Gavel Adams is a corresponding member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities. She is the cofounder and past president of the Association of Swedish Teachers and Researchers in America (ASTRA), and she has served on the Executive Committees of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study (SASS) and of the Ibsen Society of America (ISA).

During her time at SCAS, Gavel Adams will work on a translation of August Strindberg's *Occult Diary*.

ABSTRACT

August Strindberg, Sweden's most famous and most controversial author, kept a diary from 1896 to 1908. The first half is a unique testimony of his intellectual, spiritual, and artistic reorientation in the 1890s. The second half, starting in the late 1900s, continues with his passionate and all-consuming love affair and marriage to his third wife, the actress Harriet Bosse, 30 years his junior. The diary is a fascinating account of man at the center of the universe, who experiences the world surrealistically by *objets trouvés*, continuously asking himself "What does it mean?"

On the front cover, Strindberg penned: "This diary must never be published! This is my last will! and it must be obeyed!" After his death in 1912, his children placed the diary in a sealed deposition, first at the Nordic Museum, then at the Royal Library. Fifty years after his death, in 1962, the sealed deposition was opened to scholars, and several scholarly publications ensued. In 1977, a black-and-white facsimile edition was published. It created quite a stir. In 2012, *The Occult Diary* was published in the new 70-volume National Edition of August Strindberg's Collected Works. *The Occult Diary* comprises three volumes, one facsimile in color, one typographical edition and a 500+ page commentary volume.

My project here at SCAS is to finalize an English edition of the Occult Diary, which was begun in 2003 and revised in 2008, and to write an introduction in English. The English edition will be published digitally at www.litteraturbanken.se, and later possibly as print-on-demand by Stockholm University Press. A publication of the English translation was planned by an academic press in the U.S., but is presently on hold.

Among the questions I want to bring up in this seminar are the ethical and scholarly considerations in this project:

1. What is the value of the publication of a private diary of an author? Are there ethical considerations to take into account more than 100 years after the author's death?
2. What editorial principles should be applied, both with regard to textual issues in the Swedish edition and translation problems in the English edition?
3. In Sweden, the diary is read as a literary and biographical document. How might it be read/interpreted in the English-speaking world? How should a different targeted audience influence the editorial decisions and translation issues?