

«...the most peculiar book ever written...»
(Strindberg's sales pitch to Bonnier)

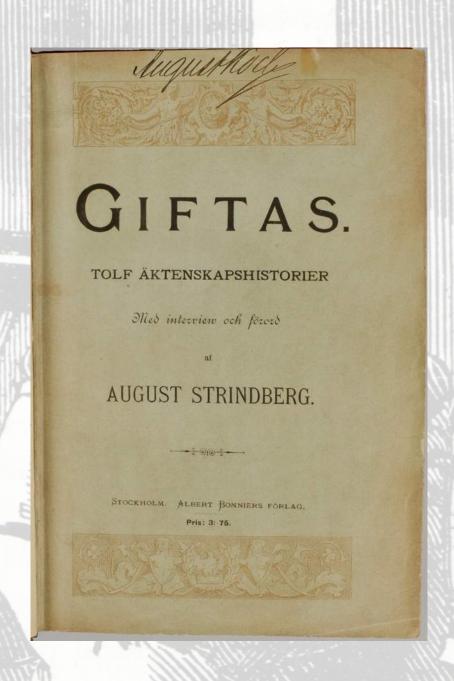
«...do you think the Piccadon [wine] will lead to any charges..?»
(Strindberg to Bonnier 13 Sept. 1884)

«[My] whore book is finished! ... It is the worst, but yet most beautiful, cleverest and filthiest thing I've written.»

(Strindberg to Pehr Staaf, July 1884)

"The book is a book for the future and will probably serve as textbook in girls' schools at some point."

(Strindberg's sales pitch for the second edition)















Reception of Giftas

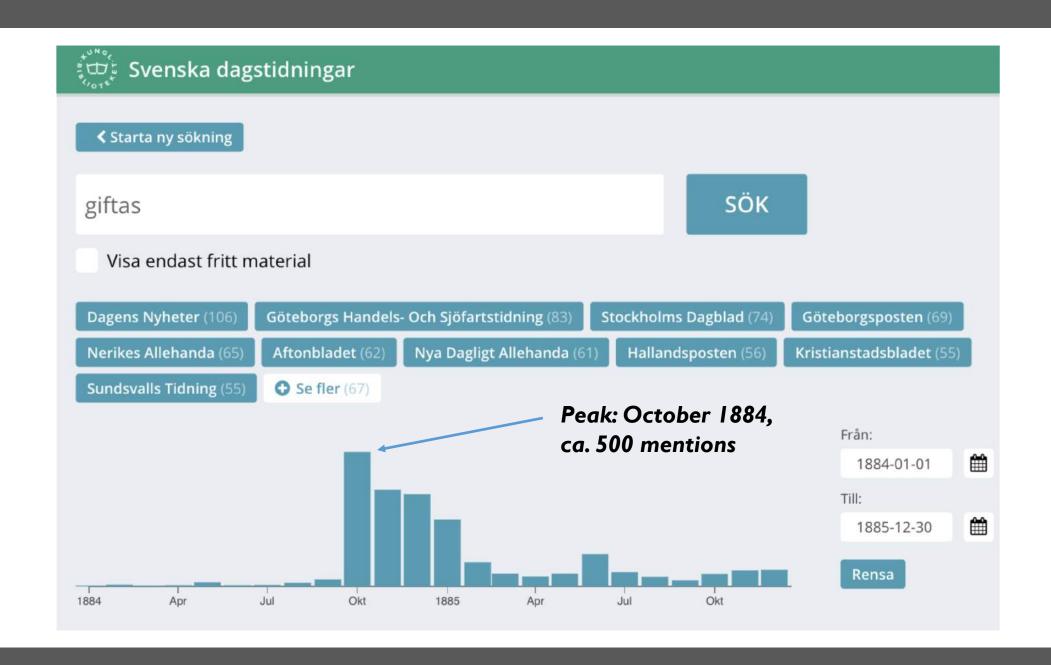


- Prosecution
- Strain on relation to friends and colleagues. Wife not happy.
- 0 % chance of receiving Nobel Prize
- Infamous
- Strindberg wows never to set foot in Sweden again



- First edition sold out/seized within days
- All publicity good publicity
- New friendships; Zola etc.
- Avantgardistic martyrdom
- Fame finally achieved

hålla har hittills ansetts vara den - anmärk etet är, som förf. med vanlig oförbe tidningen Gripen - att C. D. W. varit onåd. mot den i Posttidningens spalter. Men ju het erkänner i »förordet», hufvudsal stitieministern är ändå ett strå hvassare. När igtadt mot Henrik Ibsens uppträdand underrättelsen kom till Södertelge att Aug. Strindbergs » Giftas» konfiskerats, blef det en kapsfrågan. Vi återkomma oförtöfvad ordentlig rusning till boklådan efter boken. — Blekinge läns Tidning berättar: V. Grindbergs sem. och Den — att C. D. W. var f de i måndags en person, som i tid bed qvarstad. Till öfverste person i person som i tid bed går chefen för jus. De Posttidningens spalter. Men person i person af ett exemplar af ett exempl rätta att han bjudits 100 kr. fo Lementet en så lydande skrifvelse: Enär jag funnit en å boktryckaren telsen kom till Södertelge att Aug. men icke velat sälja för det p gs »Giftas» konfiskerats, blef det en Sonniers tryckeri härstädes tryckt skri för 500 kr.! med titel: > Giftas. Tolf äktenskapshisto rusning till boklådan efter boken. - Justitiekanslersembetet rier med interview och förord af August ock redan utsåld. stadsfiskalen A. M. Johanss Strindberg» böra med qvarstad beläggas, nge läns Tidning berättar: Vi hörde det tryckfrihetsmål, som ko har jag här medelst skolat anmoda eder en person, som i tid blifvit den iggöras mot vederbörande att skyndsamligen föranstalta om verkvekaren) för tryckande garen af ett exemplar af » Giftas», beställighet af qvarstaden. Stockholm den 3 okt. 1884. han bjudits 100 kr. för det samma, NILS VON STEYERN. "Giftas", Stri e velat sälja för det priset; möjligen G. R. Lilienber kr.! beslaglagts i Falun, b ledning haraf tog stadsfogden i st Justitiekanslersembetet har förordnat stad för i onsdags, och boklåder i beslag alla adsfiskalen A. M. Johansson till åklagare i det tryckfrihetsmål, som kommer att anhänslutsåld. iggöras mot vederbörande (författaren eller ktryckaren) för tryckandet och spridandet

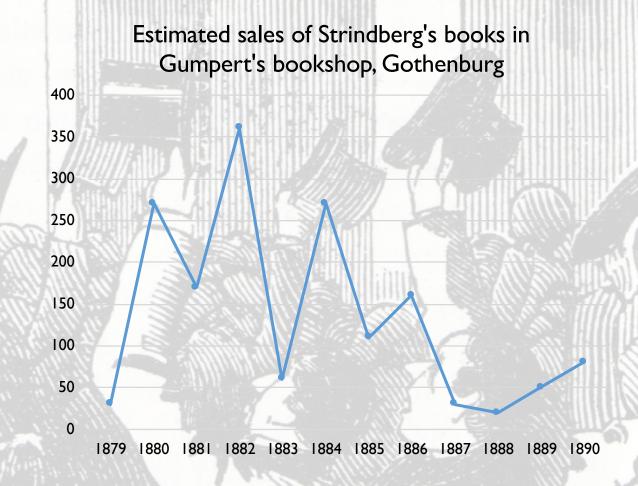


- «The well-known author has written a new work, which promises to make more noise than most of his former writings» (Nerikes Allehanda 1884-09-26)
- «It pains us to say that the latest work of the brilliant writer ... in reality is a part of the junk literature» (Göteborgsposten 1884-10-02)
- «There is no doubt that Strindberg, once charges have been brought against him, will be convicted.» (Norrköpings tidningar 1884-10-07)
- «... Strindberg is an angel in comparison with Boccacio.» (Glunten 1884-10-11)
- «Strindberg's book 'Giftas' has in Finland been prohibited by the censorship» (Borås Tidning 1884-10-16)
- «The public's interest is focused on a single person: August Strindberg.» (Norrlandsposten 1884-10-24)
- «The hero of the day, August Strindberg, [was greeted by] ... labourers, steady and broad-shouldered men [who] wanted to greet the defender of the proletariat, [and] a significant number of women, young, old, married, unmarried, all with sympathies for *Giftas*.» (*Nya Wexjöbladet* 1884-10-24)
- » The literary society 'Brage' at a grammar school in Malmo ... had acquired Strindberg's *Giftas*, which was passed between the members. When the headmaster heard that ... the book was also being read out aloud he ... disbanded the society and confiscated *Giftas* in order, as he stated, to burn it.» (*Härnösandsposten* 1884-11-01)

«STRINDBERG ACQUITTED OF ALL CHARGES»

A case of winning the battle but loosing the war?

- The modern literary writers the 'young Sweden' – alienated from the book buying clientele
- Declining sales' figures

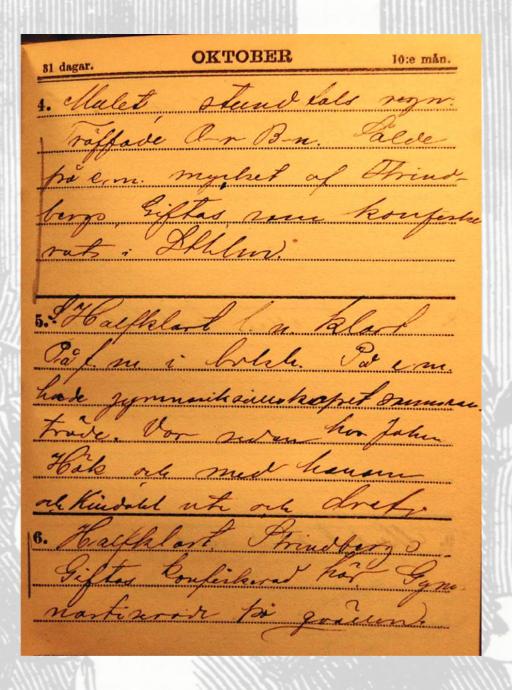


The bookseller's diary

Bookseller Johan Lundgren, Norrköping

1884-10-04: «...Sold great quanitites of *Giftas* during the afternoon, which has been confiscated in Stockholm.»

1884-10-06: «Strindberg's Giftas confiscated here.»



Giftas on the book market

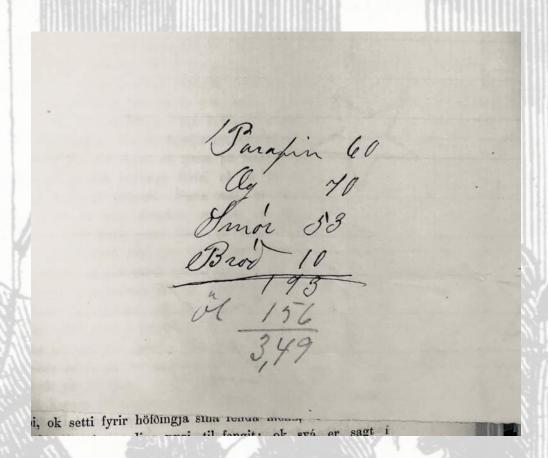
Giftas I (September 1884): 4,000 copies Giftas I, 2nd ed. (June 1885): 5,000 copies Giftas II (October 1886): 5,000 copies

- 3,680 copies (92 %) of Giftas I sold within days, the remainder seized by authorities
- Moneymaker in commercial lending libraries
- Private loans á 25 öre
- Secondhand sales: examples of Giftas being sold for 10, 40 and even 100 kr (bookshop price 3,75 kr)
- Giftas I, 2nd ed.: 2,000 copies (40 %) sold after 9 months
- Giftas II: 1,100 copies (22 %) sold after two years (!)

Giftas customers

- Not only the bookshop regulars
- "ruffians and country bumpkins" suddenly showing up in bookshops, requesting Giftas
- Sales record from Gumpert's bookshop, Gothenburg:
 - wholesaler
 - shopkeeper
 - post clerk
 - bookkeeper
 - medical doctor
 - girl
 - principal
 - student
 - engineer

• NB! c. 25 % of the copies were returned



Reception among women

- Women supportive of Strindberg (newspaper reports)
- Modern female writers such as Victoria Benedictsson, Anne Charlotte Leffler, and Ellen Key less hostile towards Giftas than their male colleagues
- Daughters bought Giftas in Gumpert's bookshop
- Hardly any women buying Strindberg's books, preferred Tolstoy, Kielland & Ibsen
- Novel reading dangerous for women, Giftas in particular
- Danish women committed to asylum for reading Giftas

