

Monstrous ‘Matterings’ of Academic Publishers: The Story of Elsevier

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Abstract. In this paper we explore the ‘monstrous’ transformations of academic publishers by telling the story of Elsevier. This monstrous becoming is interweaving both publishers and researchers into a new sociomaterial configuration, which is performing and being performed by new academic practices and identities. We first offer some insights into the current state of affairs in academic publishing, and attempt to uncover the intra-relations that constitute the undergoing transformations. We then offer insights into the digital infrastructure and services of Elsevier, which build on and underpin the neo-liberal turn in universities. Finally, we describe Elsevier’s move from traditional publisher towards information analytic business, and elaborate on the ethical implications for researchers by connecting the ‘re-materializing’ to the ‘re-mattering’ of academic practices.