Becoming Digital: The Challenges of Archiving Digital Photographs
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Digital photography has recently become one of society's most important means of recording. For this reason it has also become a potential archival record of great significance. However, as of yet, few born-digital (defined in opposition to "made digital" or "digitized" photographs, which are created by scanning analogue sources) photographs have been acquired by archives. Furthermore, few seem likely to be acquired in the immediate future. While there has been considerable attention given in archival literature to conventional photography and archives, as well as to textual electronic records and archives, little has been written about digital photography. This thesis addresses this archival challenge and aims to encourage a more active and informed archival response to digital photography. It does so by describing key features of born-digital photographs from an archival perspective and in light of the evolution of photography, and by stressing the need in archival management to understand the purposes behind the creation of digital photographs, or their functional context of creation.

The thesis draws on information gleaned from a survey questionnaire submitted to archivists in order to assess better archival activities with digital photographs. It attempts to stimulate further development of this aspect of archival work with a practical proposal for preservation of digital photographs generated in personal life.