

# Astro 426/526

Fall 2019

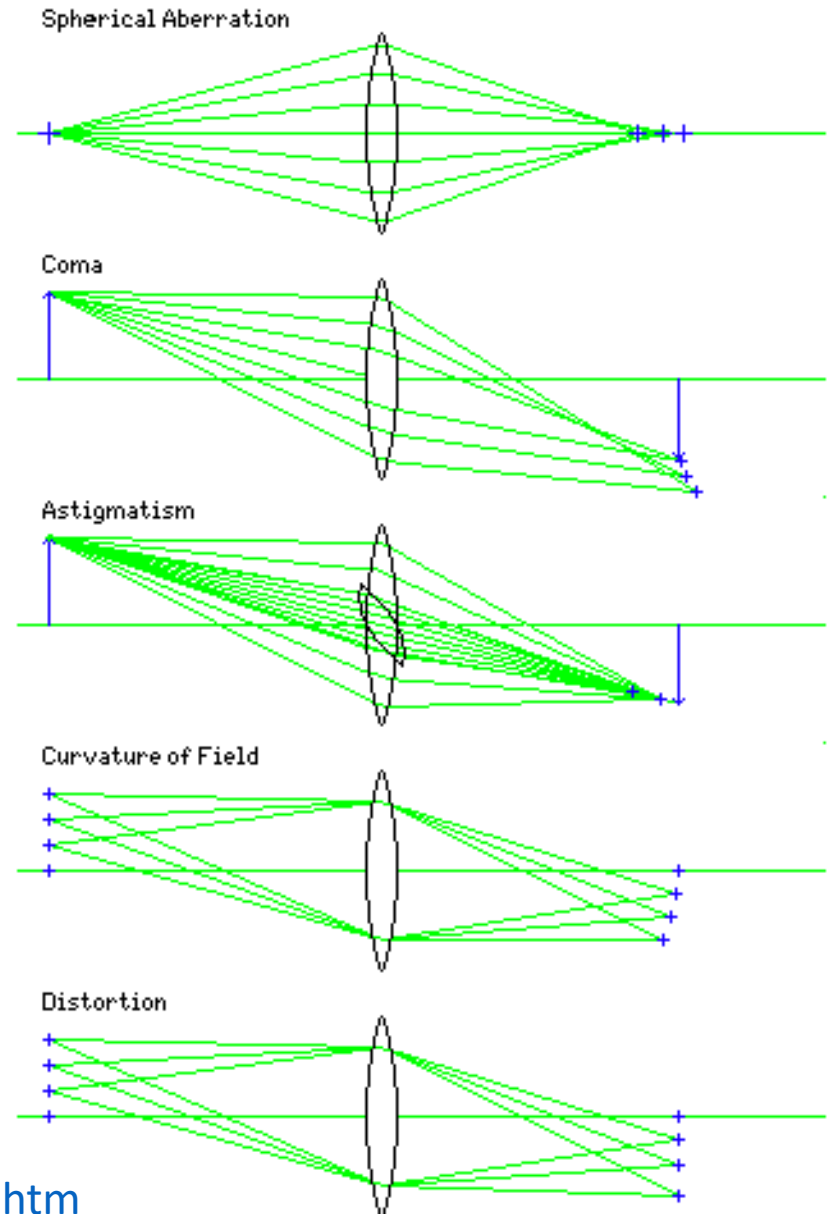
Prof. Darcy Barron

Lecture 6: Optical aberrations

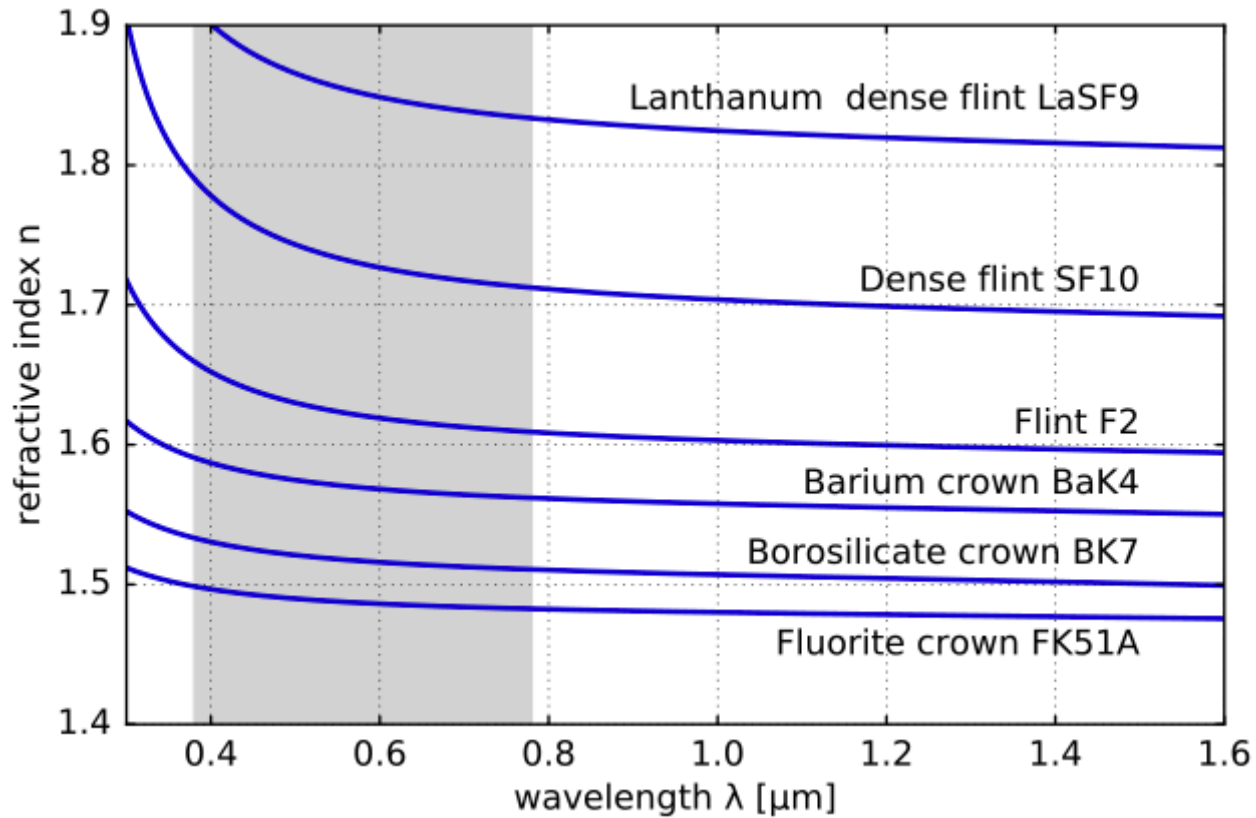
# Overview

- Last week: Whirlwind tour of telescope design parameters, defining import variables, and a few telescope designs
  - Focal length  $f$
  - Aperture size  $D$
  - Focal ratio aka  $f/\text{number}$   $F = f/D$ 
    - Inversely proportional to energy per unit time onto pixel
    - Large number: “slow” (long exposure, slowly converging rays, but high magnification)
    - Small number: “fast” (short exposure, quickly converging rays)
    - An “effective” focal ratio can be determined at any point in the system and used to determine plate scale at that point
- This week: optical aberrations, and applying telescope design principles
- Reminder: everything we’re discussing is still relevant across wavelengths (although many properties are not wavelength-independent)

# Primary Aberrations

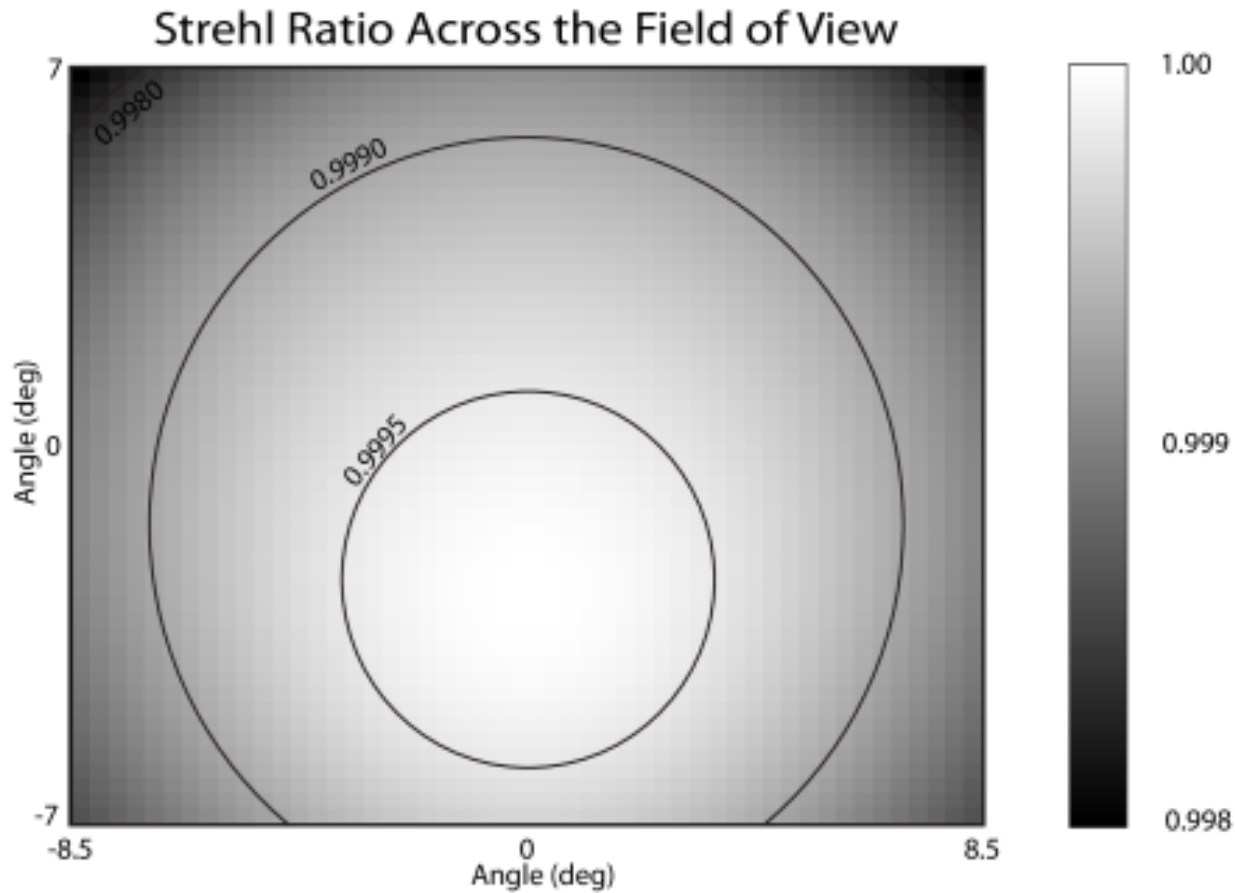


# Chromatic aberrations



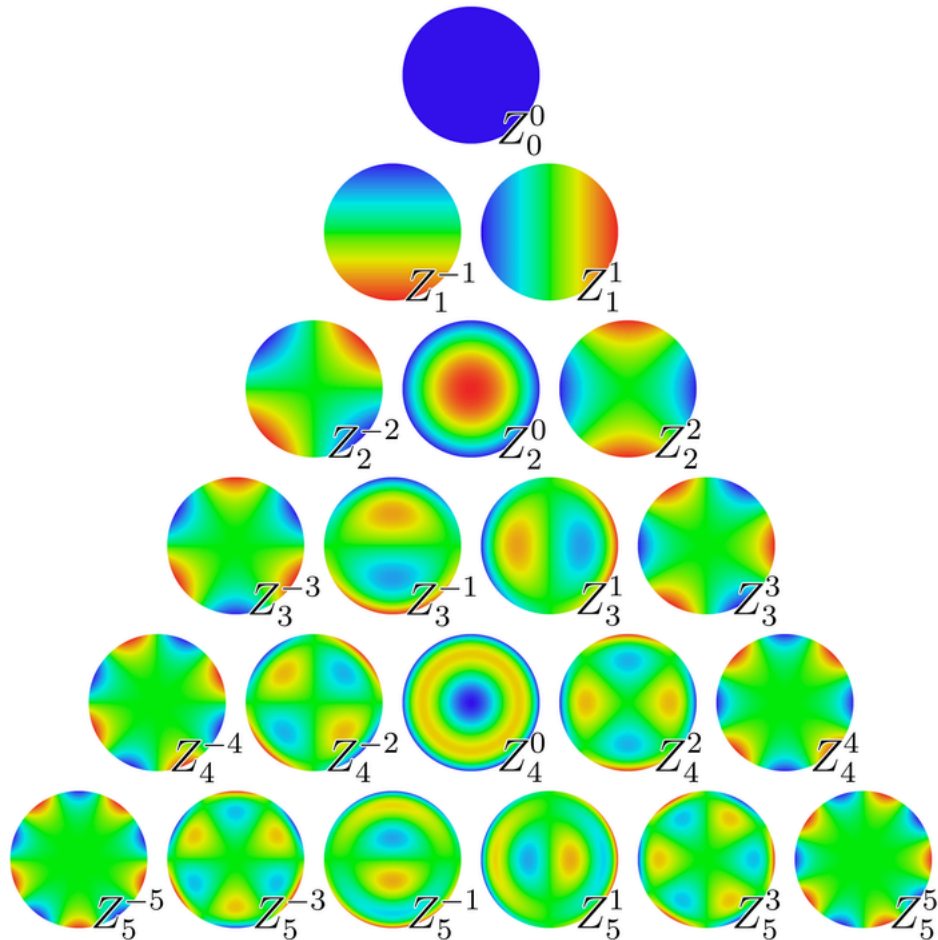
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refractive\\_index](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refractive_index)

# Strehl Ratio



<https://arxiv.org/abs/1211.0041>

# Zernike polynomials



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zernike\\_polynomials](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zernike_polynomials)

# Goodbye Aberration: Physicist Solves 2,000-Year-Old Optical Problem

JUL 05, 2019

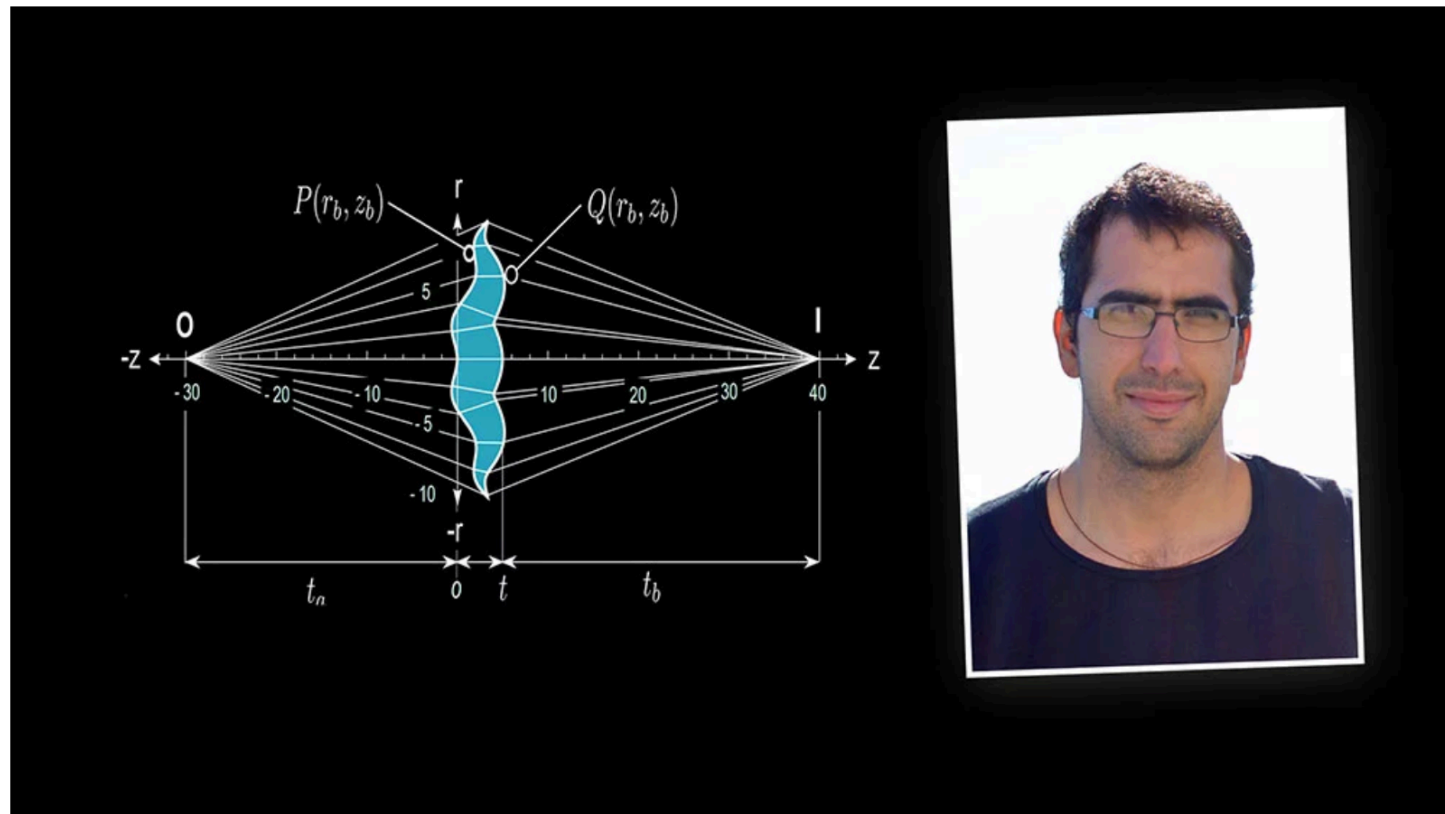
EDUARDO MACHUCA

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<https://petapixel.com/2019/07/05/goodbye-aberration-physicist-solves-2000-year-old-optical-problem/>



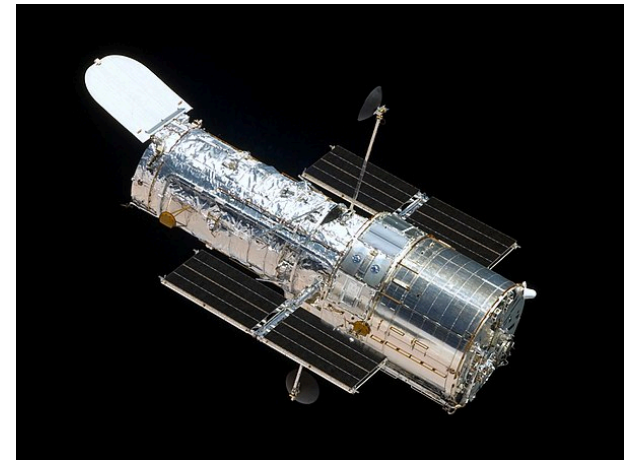
[https://www.osapublishing.org/DirectPDFAccess/E42C93D1-0D3C-B7DE-A1FC3D46EADC0D22\\_399640/ao-57-31-9341.pdf?da=1&id=399640&seq=0&mobile=no](https://www.osapublishing.org/DirectPDFAccess/E42C93D1-0D3C-B7DE-A1FC3D46EADC0D22_399640/ao-57-31-9341.pdf?da=1&id=399640&seq=0&mobile=no)





# Hubble Space Telescope

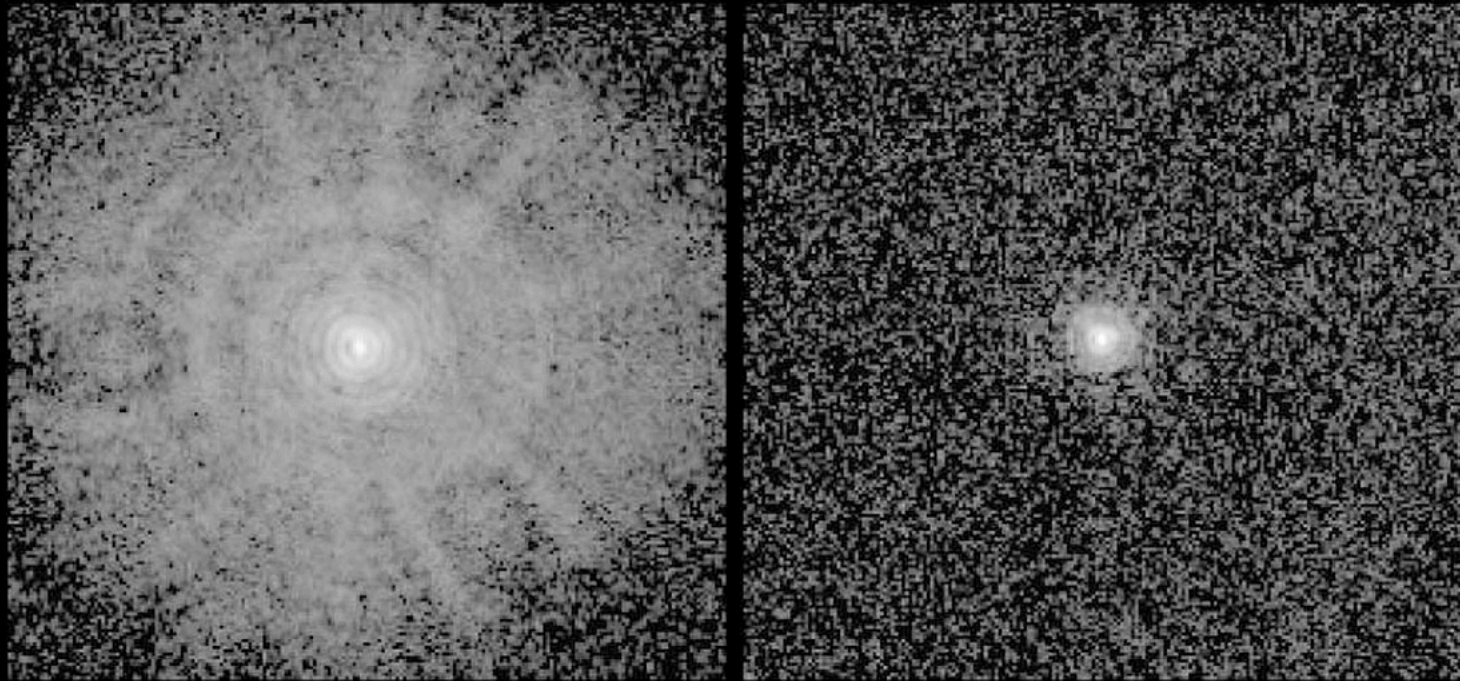
- Ritchey-Chretien telescope
  - 2.4 meter primary mirror
  - 57.6 meter focal length
  - Focal ratio  $f/24$  (big and slow)
- Four main instruments observe in near infrared, visible, and ultraviolet wavelengths
- Launched in 1990 to low-earth orbit
  - Could last a few more decades
  - Only telescope designed to be maintained by astronauts



# What happened with Hubble?

- On initial commissioning, Hubble was found to have very bad **spherical aberration**
- This resulted in blurry images and a resolution that was 10x worse than expected

# HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE FAINT OBJECT CAMERA COMPARATIVE VIEWS OF A STAR



BEFORE COSTAR

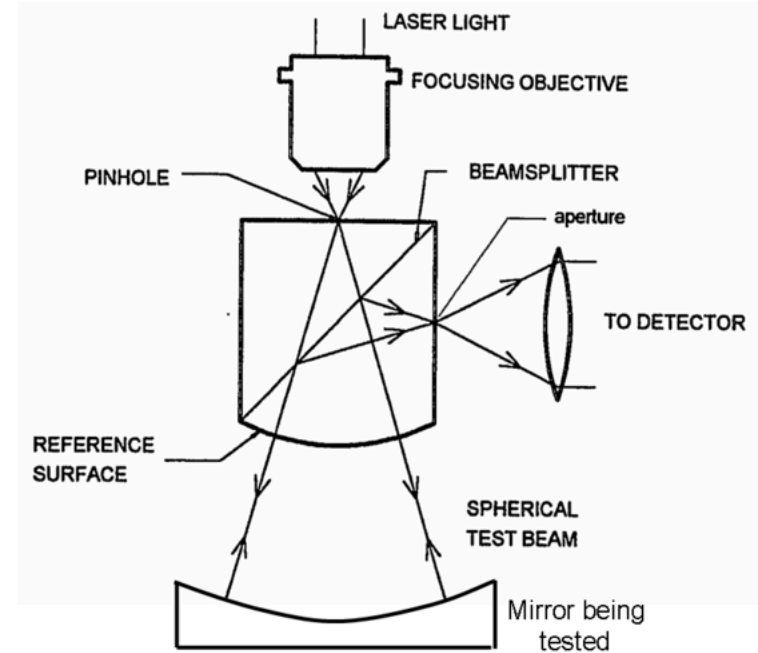
AFTER COSTAR

# What happened with Hubble?

- The mirror had been ground extremely precisely, especially since it needed to be good enough to observe ultraviolet wavelengths
- Demonstrator mirror that this level of finishing was even possible is in storage at UNM (Prof. McGraw)
  - Smooth to 10 nm - If Hubble's primary mirror were scaled up to the diameter of the Earth, the biggest bump would be only six inches tall.
- The edge of the mirror was too flat, by 2200 nm

# What happened with Hubble?

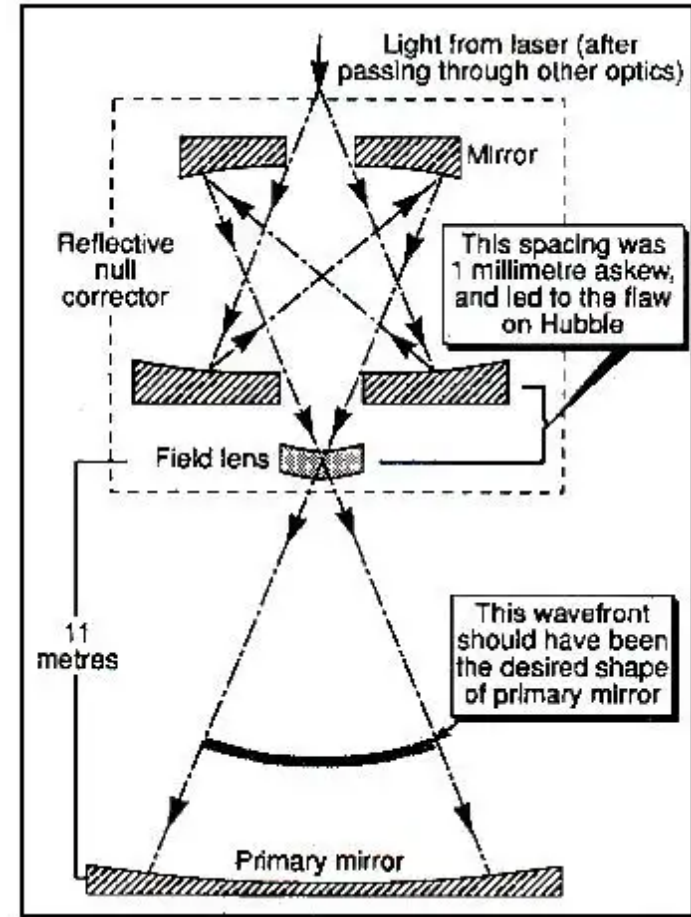
- Many different methods to test the shape of a mirror, and complex mirrors require more complex methods
- Nulling interferometry requires complex equipment but should be straightforward to understand
- Checks the deviation from a perfect spherical surface, to sub-wavelength precision



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Null\\_corrector](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Null_corrector)

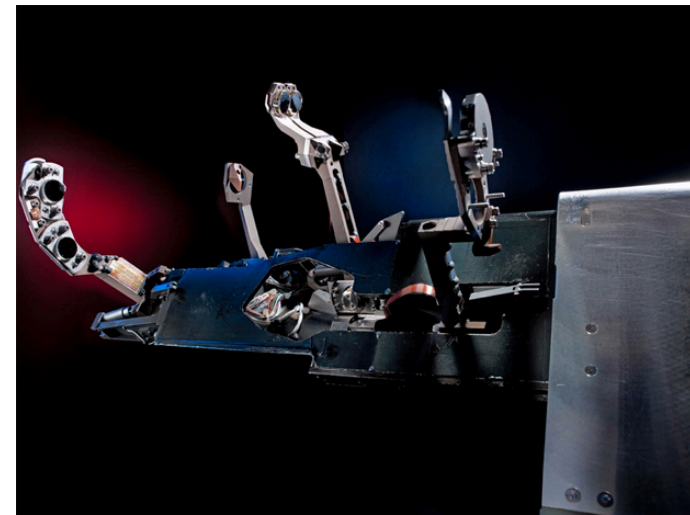
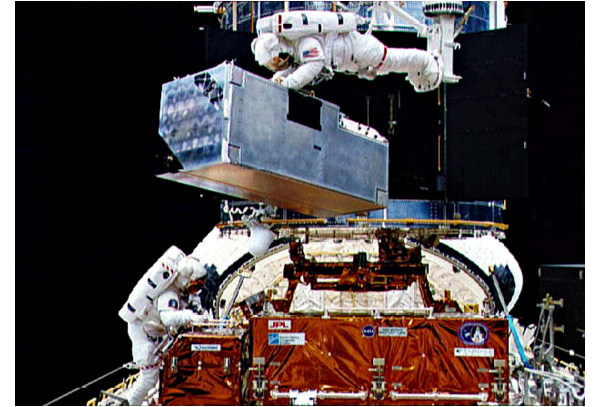
# What happened with Hubble?

- Aspherical surfaces can be tested using a null corrector
  - Setup for Hubble mirror shown at right
- Complicated setup of null corrector must be correct, to give the right surface figure to follow
- Hard to double-check if this is the only way to verify the figure
  - The company ignored problems with a coarser measurement since it wasn't supposed to be 'accurate'



# How was Hubble fixed?

- COSTAR: Corrective Optics Space Telescope Axial Replacement (COSTAR)
- 10 small mirrors on motorized arms corrected for the aberration on each of Hubble's instruments
- Instruments have been replaced and upgraded to correct for aberration, so COSTAR is no longer in use
  - Is on display at the Smithsonian  
<https://www.spacetelescope.org/about/general/instruments/costar/>

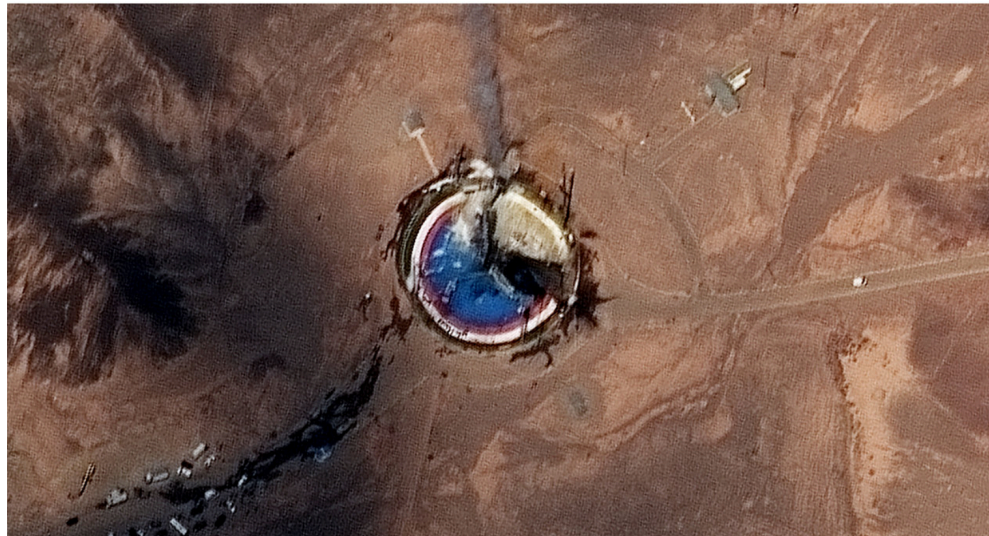
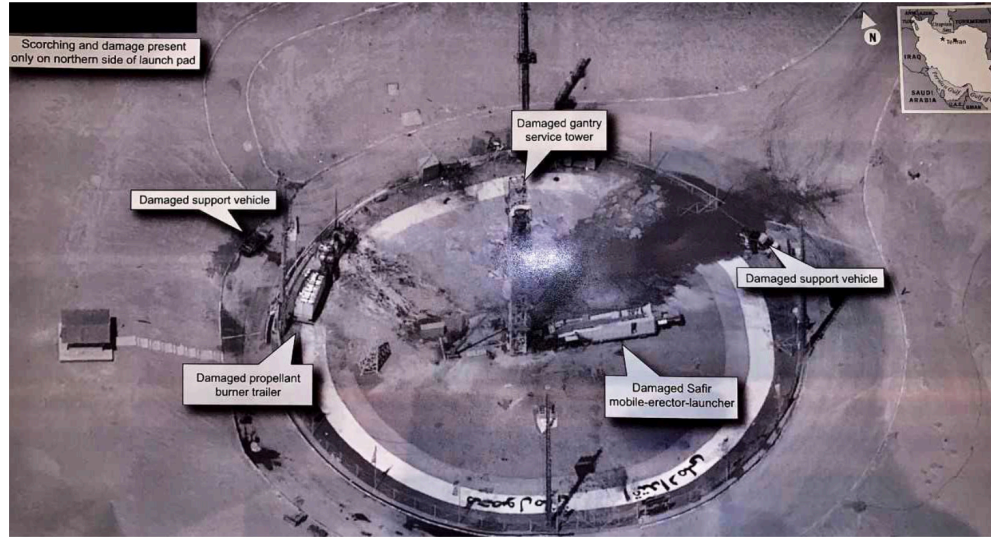


# Trump Tweets Sensitive Surveillance Image Of Iran

August 30, 2019 · 4:22 PM ET



<https://www.npr.org/2019/08/30/755994591/president-trump-tweets-sensitive-surveillance-image-of-iran>



A commercial satellite image from the company Maxar (bottom); the image tweeted by President Trump (top) appears to be of better quality.

(Bottom) Satellite image ©2019 Maxar Technologies; (top) @realDonaldTrump