



Thomas Young

1773-1829

Thomas Young, a British scientist and physician, contributed to the science of imaging by discovering important properties of light and human vision.

Young's work in physical optics did much to establish the wave theory of light. In 1801 Young conducted his famous "double slit" experiment where light was shown to interfere with itself and prompted Young to conclude that light had wave-like properties.

As a physician, Young was interested in sense perception. He described how the lens of the human eye changes shape to focus on objects at varying distances, known as visual accommodation, and explained the cause of astigmatism. Young also proposed that color vision was the result of three independent sensors. This hypothesis was further developed by Helmholtz yielding the Young-Helmholtz theory of trichromacy which was experimentally proven in the 1960's.