

## *USPS Scrambled Indicia Issues 1997-2004 First Day Covers*

As with any new invention and product there have been many unscrupulous people through the years trying to counterfeit products using many ingenious ways. And as this develops, legitimate companies look for technologies to keep one step ahead of the criminals to protect their products from this fate.

One of these security protectors “Scrambled Indicia” was developed by a company called Graphic Security Systems Corporation (GSSC) and used on specific USPS stamp issues from 1997-2004 with it’s patented pre-press process that scrambles, distorts, intertwines, overlaps or otherwise manipulates images making encoded information on these stamps unreadable by the naked eye but readable with a special Stamp Decoder lens. This process was originally conceived to be used on only the higher denominated stamps, but was expanded to other issues as a marketing ploy. In addition, the process makes the stamps non-copyable by current color copiers and or digital scanners.

The decoder lens described here is a precision optical device manufactured with the same acrylics used for prescription eyeglass lenses. Each decoder is comprised of nearly a thousand tiny elongated lenses called lenticules.

During the years 1997-2004 the United States Postal Service produced nearly 1.75 billion postage stamps that contain these “hidden images” These cloaked images embedded in the stamps are only visible when viewed with this special decoder device.