

The Scott company gave up dealing in stamps but continued to publish the catalog, gradually providing more detail as the hobby evolved and collectors became more sophisticated. In addition to the factual information about the stamps, the catalog includes price information based on market analysis and reported sales from the previous year.

For us, the Scott numbering system is key to our collecting habits - a simple means of organizing our stamps and a standard means of being able to communicate each individual stamps characteristics. The catalog assigns plain numbers for regular mail stamps, and uses capital letter prefixes for special-purpose types, such as "B" for semipostals "C" for airmail, ..., etc. The numbers are usually consecutive; there are some annoying gaps among older stamps, where some numbered types were later renumbered/removed/added, and among newer stamps where Scott has left numbers unassigned in the anticipation of additional stamps in a series.

If more stamps than expected appear, Scott will add a capital letter as suffix, or if the change is very recent, it will renumber stamps. Minor variations, such as shades or errors, get a lowercase letter; so the "C3a" above indicates a variation (valuable error – two up for auction this month) on the third US airmail stamp.

**Economic and Collector Impact:** Because of its commercial importance the publishers of the Scott Catalogue claim copyright on their numbering systems, and grant only limited licenses for their use by others. The inconsistency with which Scott enforced these licenses resulted in a lawsuit by Krause Publications (publishers of the Minkus Catalogue) for copyright infringement. After Krause filed a defense the suit was settled out of court, and Krause continued to reference the Scott numbers. Attempts by collectors to establish an alternative (Minkus) have not been successful - though some specialty groups, e.g. PNC3, have developed one that covers plate-number coils. As such, the editors, of this distinctly US catalog, have a great influence over what is and is not considered to be a valid postage stamp. An example: In the 1960s the countries of the United Arab Emirates issued several series of stamps that were never actually on sale in a post office, so Scott does not recognize or list them. One must go to a Michel (German) catalog to see them listed and described. This lack of a Scott recognition means that most American dealers will refuse to trade in such stamps.

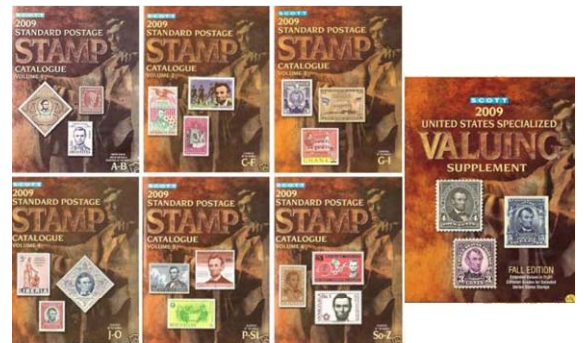
**Political Impact:** Similarly, Scott generally does not list most stamps from countries embargoed by the US government, or in some cases, lists them — but with no prices. To some extent, this is unavoidable, since the ban on importation means that Scott's editors are unable even to acquire copies of the stamps to be described. Moreover, since US dealers and collectors are unable to buy the stamps legally, they are unlikely to have any need of the data. (Again, interested persons typically use Michel or other catalogs instead.) The policy changes with government policy; stamps of Libya and North Vietnam recently reappeared in Scott after an absence of some years.

The contents of each six general volumes (and month of issue) are:

- Volume 1: United States and Countries A-B (April)
- Volume 2: Countries C-F (May)
- Volume 3: Countries G-I (June)
- Volume 4: Countries J-O (July)
- Volume 5: Countries P-Si (August)
- Volume 6: Countries So-Z (September).

Three additional volumes primarily for use by American collectors include:

- U.S. Specialized (October)
- U.S. Stamp Values (October)
- Classic Specialized (November).



Six of the Nine 2009 Edition of the Scott Catalogue (\$300+)



May 12



May 27

### May Stamp Issues



May 17

This month, the USPS will issue three new stamps:

Legends of Hollywood (16th) Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003),

Kate "God Bless America" Smith (1907-1986), the celebrated singer and entertainer, and

the new 'Hallmark card' stamp, the first of a new "Butterfly" series for those oversized greeting cards.

