(1985, 193). Naming information is the special business of librarians and information professionals. Applied in our role as "neutral" intermediaries between users and information, our theories, models, and descriptions are as presumptuous and controlling as scientists' construction and containment of nature.

In earlier research (Olson 1994) I documented a pervasive belief among information scientists that in order to create an overriding unity in language the diversity and the subjectivity of language need to be standardized. Librarians call such a constructed universal language a *controlled vocabulary.* To achieve subject access, representations of documents having the same or a similar subject are gathered within the context of a catalog or index. Gathering the items depends upon always naming a topic in the same way—hence the justification of controlled vocabulary: it allows for one-stop shopping. Additionally, using the same system across libraries is economical. For example, the Library of Congress (LC) has sold standardized catalog records since 1901, saving cataloging labor in thousands of individual libraries. Yet in imposing controlled vocabulary we construct both a limited system for the representation of information and a universality/diversity binary opposition. Our systems seem *transparent* in Henri Lefvebre's use of the term (1991, 28)—they appear unbiased and universally applicable—but they actually hide their exclusions under the guise of neutrality. Not surprisingly, this fundamental presumption on which our practice rests disproportionately affects access to information outside of the cultural mainstream and about groups marginalized in our society.

I will trace the presumption of universality from its formal adoption into library practice in the nineteenth century to its manifestation in today's libraries by examining three texts in each of two modes of practice: subject headings, the verbal representation of topics in library catalogs; and classification, the notational representation of topics used for the physical and electronic organization of library collections for browsing. For each mode I will read and reread texts in the foundational literature, the current standards, and canonical applications of those standards, as shown in table 1.

Charles Cutter's *Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalog* (1876) is generally regarded as the first codification of library cataloging rules to state principles (I will use the most cited fourth ed. [1904]). The *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH) is the modern manifestation of Cutter's principles for subject access and the major standard in North America, with considerable influence worldwide. Melvil Dewey's introductions to the *Dewey Decimal Classification* (DDC), also first published in 1876, explain