

Chapter Summary – Module Fourteen

Mass communication research begins with a set of assumptions about the nature of human behavior. A variety of paradigms are available for use by scholars. Each is based on previous scholarship. One uses a social science approach and the other a critical studies approach. The social science approach emphasizes the use of quantitative measurement and statistical analysis to learn about human behavior. The basic unit that is studied is the individual or small social group. The critical approach seeks understanding of central issues raised by the connections of media and society. Cultural theorists look at the symbolic meaning behind behavior. This chapter outlines some of the research from both schools of thought.