

Information Cycle

Immediate

Sources: Social media (Twitter, Facebook); 24-hr/cable news (CNN, Fox)
Information: Breaking news, initial reports, early facts

HOURS

Sources: TV (national news, local outlets); radio (NPR); news Web sites; social media continues
Information: On-scene reports & interviews; early efforts to establish facts, timeline, people, causes, consequences, responses

DAYS

Sources: Daily newspapers (national, local); TV, radio news continues; professional blogs (Daily Beast, Daily Kos)
Information: Correction of early misinformation; clarification of facts; early development of background information (what is this place?, who are these people?); early commentary and preliminary opinion by general experts; debate/different "sides" begin to develop

WEEKS

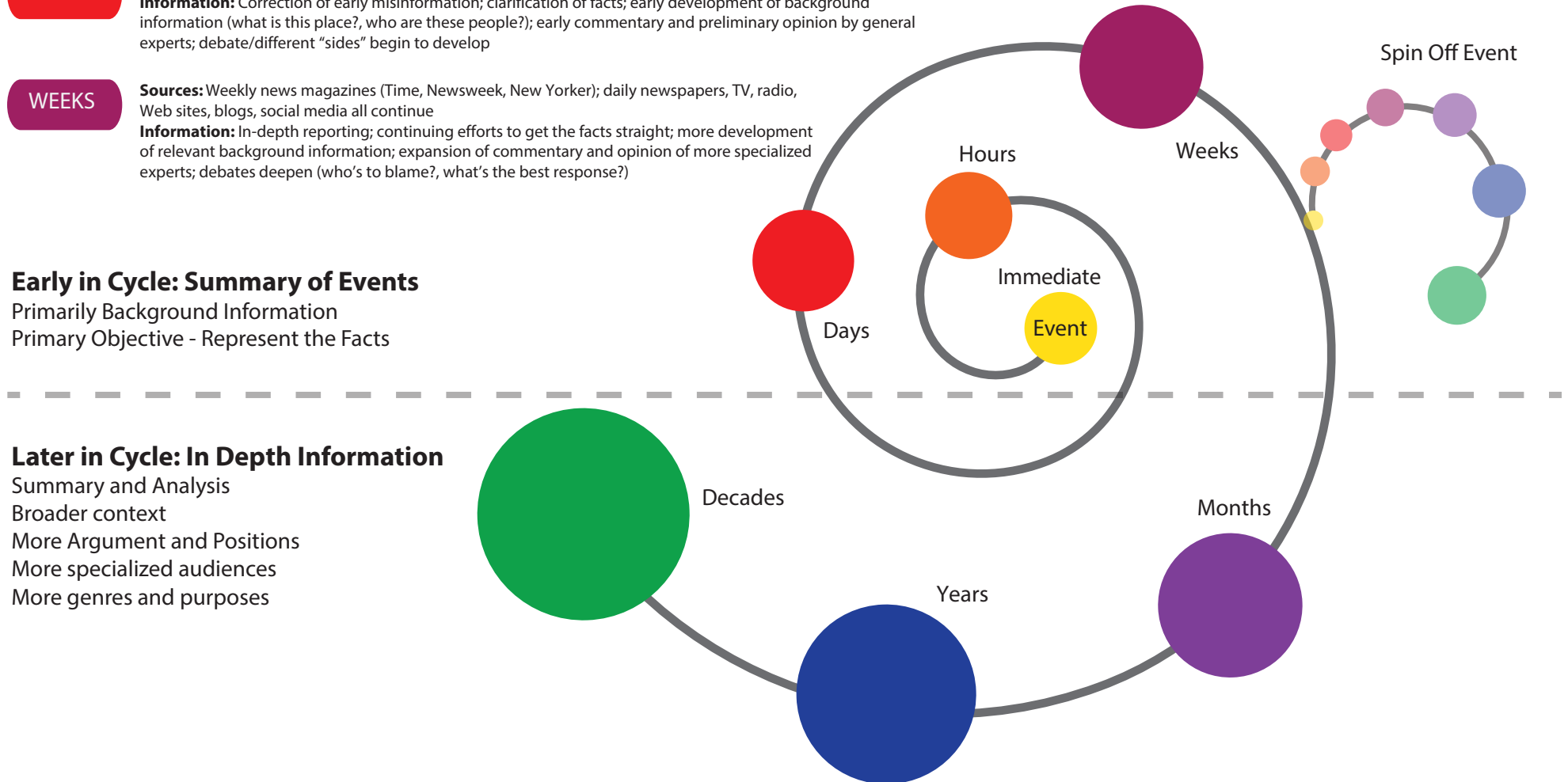
Sources: Weekly news magazines (Time, Newsweek, New Yorker); daily newspapers, TV, radio, Web sites, blogs, social media all continue
Information: In-depth reporting; continuing efforts to get the facts straight; more development of relevant background information; expansion of commentary and opinion of more specialized experts; debates deepen (who's to blame?, what's the best response?)

Early in Cycle: Summary of Events

Primarily Background Information
 Primary Objective - Represent the Facts

Later in Cycle: In Depth Information

Summary and Analysis
 Broader context
 More Argument and Positions
 More specialized audiences
 More genres and purposes



Months

Sources: Monthly news magazines (The Atlantic, Harper's); more specialized magazines, news outlets, social media, and online sources
Information: Investigative reporting; early analysis; in-depth background research and information; effort to understand the "why" and "how"; more specialized experts are consulted; emergence of a "bigger picture" of event; deepening understanding of larger causes and long-term consequences

Years

Sources: Scholarly books and articles; deeply researched and carefully vetted publications; reports from highly regarded institutions; government publications
Information: In-depth analysis by variety of highly specialized experts; massive amounts of data; debate moves from immediate event to issues of prevention, solutions, systemic problems; event is put into larger historical, social, political, scientific contexts

Decades

Sources: Scholarly books and articles continue; trade books/popular press books; government publications Wikipedia pages; encyclopedia entries; reference books; textbooks
Information: Analysis continues in books and scholarly sources as new information and data are discovered; narrative of event solidifies as reference sources summarize key points, people, and developments