

# Chapter 5: *Frank Jude*



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## When Did this Event Occur?

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Frank Jude and his friend Lovell Harris were severely beaten by a group of off-duty police officers on October 24, 2004. His friend was able to run away from them, but Jude suffered many life-threatening injuries.



## Where Did this Event Happen?

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- Andrew Splenger's home
- Located in Bay View, Milwaukee
- A housewarming party was being held there
- Jude was invited by two of his friends, Kristen Antonissen and Katie Brown

# Who Were the Main Actors Involved?

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## Off-duty police officers

- Andrew Splenger
- Jon Bartlett
- Daniel Masarik
- Ryan Packard
- Ryan Lemke
- Jon Clausing
- Joseph Stromei



# What Happened?

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- This event is well known as one of the top ten worst cases of police brutality.
- Frank Jude was attacked along with his friend Lovell Harris as they were leaving a party in 2004, by 3 off-duty police officers.
- His friend Harris was able to escape after receiving a knife on his face but Jude was not as lucky.
- Jude was repeatedly beaten by the officers, because one of them claimed he stole his wallet that had his police badge in it.
- In fact, one of the officers stabbed his ear with a pen and when a on-duty police officer arrived, instead of helping Jude, he proceeded to join the off-duty officers with the beating.

## Why Did this Event Happen?

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- The off-duty officers claim they beat Jude up because he stole a wallet.
- Jude however, claims that upon his arrival to the party, he was receiving stares from those at the party because he was the only other person of color, besides his friend.
- Also, his friend Harris was pulled from his truck by two men uttering racial slurs. When Jude was getting beat up he was also being called racial slurs.
- It's hard to determine the reason why this event happened because if it was because of the stolen wallet, the off-duty cops could have just questioned Jude instead of getting violent.

## What Happened as a Result of the Event?

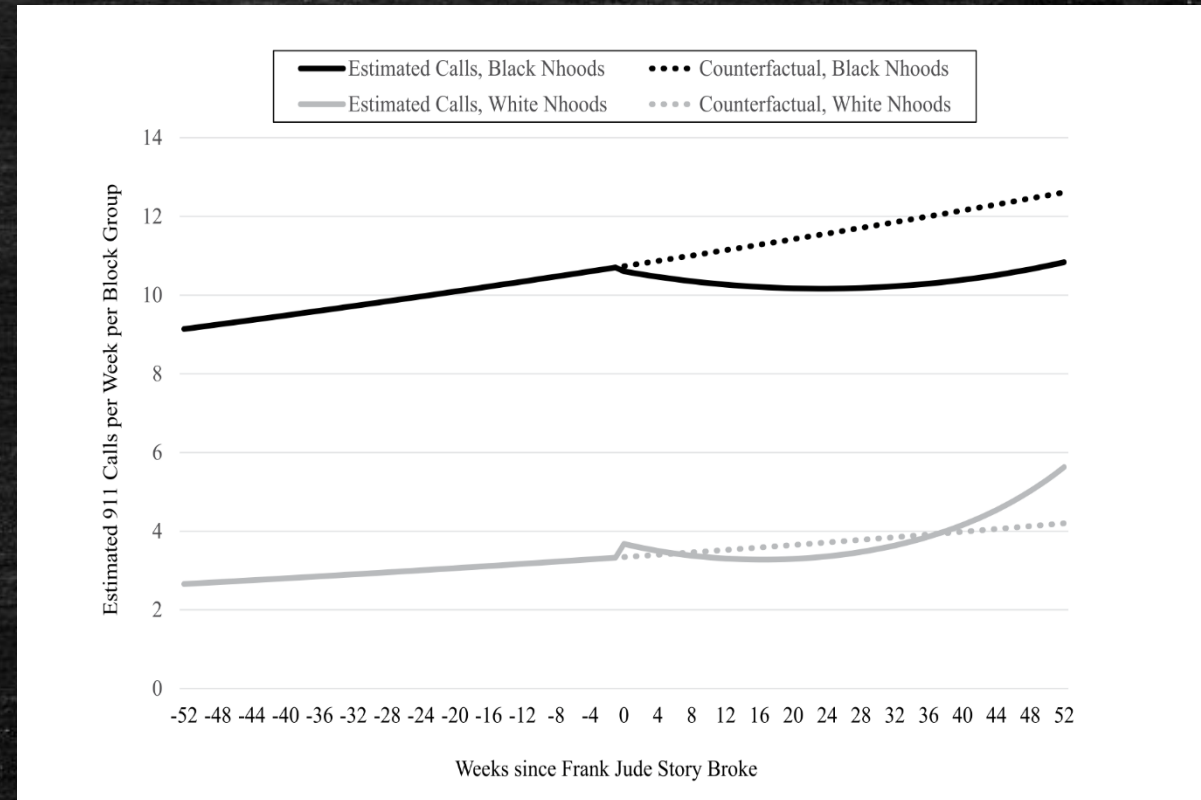


<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/former-cops-sentenced-for-beating/>

- As soon as the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* published the report on Frank Jude from February 6, 2005, about how the police tried to cover up the event, black residents in Milwaukee began to protest. These protestors demanded that the district attorney charge the officers responsible.
- While nine officers were dismissed, Spengler and two other officers were tried, but then acquitted by an all-white jury.
- The police chief fired eight officers and disciplined four other officers. One officer was suspended for 23 days, while the other two were suspended for 76 days. According to Reuthling (2005), they were disciplined mainly because they would not explain what happened when Frank Jude was beaten. A federal investigation then took place, which led to the conviction of seven officers.
- Frank Jude accepted a \$2 million dollar settlement from the City of Milwaukee.

## What Were the Major Impacts/Effects?

The main impact that the Frank Jude case left was that people were less likely to call the police, and thus less likely to report crime. In a study done by Desmond, Papachristos and Kirk from Harvard University, Yale University and Oxford University, published in the *American Sociological Review*, the authors analyzed the impact that the Frank Jude case had in reporting crime. They found that cases involving police violence against black men who were unarmed have a major impact on crime reporting. After the beating of Frank Jude, Milwaukee residents were less likely to report crime to the police, especially in black neighborhoods. Their study estimated a loss of about 22,200 911 calls, and 56% of the loss came from black neighborhoods (Desmond et al., 2016, p. 870). The authors labeled this impact “The Jude Effect”.



*Police Violence and Citizen Crime Reporting in the Black Community*



## What Were the Major Impacts/Effects? (Cont'd)

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Another effect that happened because of the Frank Jude incident was that the crime rate went up. According to Lantigua-Williams (2016), from March to August 2005, after Jude's story was released, there were 87 homicides that took place in Milwaukee, which is a 32% increase from the same six months in both 2004 and 2006.

Frank Jude was severely affected by this beating. He had to get surgery so that he could breathe out of his nose again and he has permanent damage in both his hand and his eyes. He has also said that he has panic attacks and nightmares often, so he tries to avoid contact with the police as much as possible. According to Diedrich (2016), Jude noted that his family is greatly affected by the incident because he will always have permanent physical and mental injuries that both he and his family will have to deal with.

## Frank Jude Speaks Out

"I'm not the same guy I was before"  
- Frank Jude (0:49)

In this video, Frank Jude speaks to the public and explains the impact that this incident had on him personally.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lbe2wl29SCI>

Click the link to see Frank Jude speak about the incident.

## Impact on Policing or Practice

This case was one of the top 10 worst cases of police brutality and had been the biggest case against the Milwaukee Police Department in 25 years. Years after the incident, one of the officers involved was promoted to sergeant. This showed the community that there was always going to be injustice in cases like these. This officer, Bradley Blum, had been there that night, never charged, and then promoted. The Department never fully punished the officers.



Most Americans than in 2015, say police in most communities are more likely to use deadly force against a black person than a white person. (61% today compared to 49% in 2015) In short, policing hasn't directly changed because this same treatment is seen today. Frank Jude's case didn't prompt officers to work harder at lessening force and bettering communication skills. Police officers still use this excessive force today and get away with it. And this case paved the way for those officers to almost be allowed to use this force.

# Did anything change as a result?

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- One major change as a result was the settlement awarded to Frank Jude Jr. He received \$2 million from the city of Milwaukee which admits fault to the city in conjunction with criminal convictions for several of the officers involved. (DeLong 2012)
- According to Chief Hegerty, "the 'code of silence' that was discovered during the trial involving the beating of Frank Jude, Jr." (Olson 2007) The code of silence is where officers will withhold information to prevent fellow officers from getting into trouble. The timeline of events that led up to and after the beating were not clear and hindered the investigation and could potentially harm future investigations. Two officers that arrived after the beating were disciplined." (Ruethling 2005) This indicated that the Police Chief was not going to tolerate these actions in the future.
- In 2015, one officer that nearly lost his job due to the beating, was promoted to the rank of sergeant. This indicates how there can be a divergence of opinion years later after an event. Chief Flynn stated that the promotion was appropriate while the attorney that represent Jude said it sends the wrong message. This could send a message that after a certain period, certain things could be forgotten and moved on. (Handelman 2015)

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