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The jury never took the time to consider whether what Lafaver did in the seconds before Steve punched him was lawful. Yes, Julienne was blocking the van. Did she anticipate that a 195-pound police officer would be willing to nearly break her wrist while arresting her? Certainly she did not. Did she think he would invent a charge against her just to justify a heavier charge? Who would expect that of a police officer? Right under the jurors' noses was enough evidence to finally hold a bad cop accountable. But they didn't take the time to consider it.

They heard the judge say they must follow his instructions. Like obedient students in some demented math class, the jury added up the columns as the judge gave it to them and came up with the answers the judge was seeking. In so doing, they ignored their responsibility to provide justice, to Argue and to the community. The legal thicket was dense, the judge intimidating, the prosecution prejudicial, and the defense inept and apologetic — but all that is standard. What was depressing was that the jury had bought the police story before they entered the jury room.

One juror did acknowledge that expert testimony that the woman was being hurt might have swayed her. Another said that Argue's choice to run after punching Lafaver sealed his fate. (The prosecution called his flight "cowardly." Argue supporters called it "common sense.")

Another juror concluded, "Officer Lafaver was performing his duty. She was committing a crime. He was arresting her. She didn't cooperate, and he had to hurt her." The less violent alternatives that the police ignored, the mother's pain, the danger to the child — all were ignored by a middle-class jury, frozen with shock at the sight of a protester punching a cop.

Ironically, jurors who spoke afterwards seemed troubled and claimed they were against "Rodney King"-type police vio-