

Ohioans to Stop Executions

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://otse.org/gasping-for-air-autopsies-reveal-troubling-effects-of-lethal-injection/>

Campaign and Advocacy

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otse.org

[Hannah Kubbins](#) / September 23, 2020

Dr. Joel Zivot stared at the autopsy reports. The language was dry and clinical, in stark contrast to the weight of what they contained detailed, graphic accounts of the bodies of inmates executed by lethal injection in Georgia.

It was 2016, and the autopsy reports had been given to him by lawyers representing inmates on death row. He had received simple instructions: Interpret the levels of an anesthetic in the blood to determine whether the inmates were conscious during their execution. As an anesthesiologist at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Zivot specialized in reading these levels. But as he looked beyond the toxicology reports, something else caught his eye. The lungs were way too heavy.

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