

# [Death firing squad, each of them equally](https://assignbuster.com/death-firing-squad-each-of-them-equally/)

Death Penalty and The Eighth AmendmentThe expression “ an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” has taken on a whole newmeaning. Lately, murderers have been getting a punishment equal to their crime, death. In 1967, executions in the United States were temporarily suspended togive the federal appellate courts time to decide whether or not the deathpenalty was unconstitutional. Then, in 1972, the United States Supreme Courtruled in the case of “ Furman versus Georgia” that the death penalty violatedthe Eight Amendments.

According to the Eighth Amendment, “ Excessive bail shallnot be required, no excessive fines imposed, nor cruel or unusual punishmentsinflicted.” After the Supreme Court made this ruling, states reviewed theirdeath penalty laws. In 1976, in the case of “ Gregg versus Georgia” the SupremeCourt ruled state death penalty laws were not unconstitutional. Presently inthe United States the death penalty can only be used as punishment forintentional killing. Still, the death penalty violates the Eighth Amendment andshould be outlawed in the United States. Currently in the United States there are five methods used for executingcriminals: the electric chair, gas chamber, lethal injection, hanging, andfiring squad, each of them equally cruel and unusual in there own ways.

When a person is sentenced to death by electrocution he strapped to achair and electrodes are attached to his head and leg. The amount of voltage israised and lowered a few times and death is supposed to occur within threeminutes. Three whole minutes with electricity flowing through someone’s body, while his flesh burns. Three minutes may not seem like a very long time, but tosomeone who is waiting for his body to die, three minutes can feel like aneternity. Three minutes is the approximate time it takes for a person to die ifeverything goes right, but in some cases it takes longer for people to die. In1990, Jesse Tafero, a prisoner in Florida, remained conscious for four minuteswhile witnesses watched ashes fall from his head. In Georgia in 1984, it tooknearly twenty minutes for Alpha Otis Stephens to die. At 12: 18 am on December12, he was shocked with electricity for two minutes, and his body still showedsigns of life.

The doctors had to wait six minutes to examine his body becauseit was too hot to touch. Stephens was still alive, so he was electrocuted foranother two minutes. Finally at 12: 37 am doctors pronounced him dead.

When a person is executed in the gas chamber he is strapped to a chairin an airtight room. A cyanide pellet is dropped in sulfuric acid, which formsa lethal gas. The prisoner remains conscious for a few minutes while strugglingto breath. These gas chambers are similar to the ones used by the Nazi’s inWorld War II concentration camps.

Fifty years ago, America was quick to condemnthe Germans for persecuting Jew’s, but, today, in 1996 Americans execute theirown people the exact same way. Lethal injection is the newest form of execution in the United States. The person being executed is injected with a deadly dose of barbiturates throughan intravenous tube in his arm. This method is considered the most humane andefficient way of execution, but a federal judge noted that “ a slight error indosage or administration can leave a prisoner conscious but paralyzed whiledying, a sentient witness of his or her own asphyxiation.” Since 1985 therehave been three botched injections in Texas alone.

In one case it took 24minutes to kill a criminal because the tube leaked and sprayed the chemicalstowards the witnesses. In 1989, too weak a dosage of drugs caused Stephen McCoyto choke and heave for several minutes before he died. Hanging used to be the most common way to execute a person, but now itis only used in Delaware, Montana, New Hampshire, and Washington. Hanging isnot a very useful way of execution, because if the drop is too short the personbeing executed dies through gradual strangulation and if the rope is too longthe person’s head is ripped off. There is no punishment more unusual thenhaving your head ripped off, so the death penalty is in direct violation withthe Constitution.

When someone is executed by a firing squad he is strapped to a chair andhas a target attached to his chest. Then five marksmen aim for the target andfire. Having people being paid to shot