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The Pit & the Pendulum: Sex Offender Laws

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**The United States**

**Sexually Violent Person Act**

Sexually Violent Person (SVP) acts contain the following central features: (1) their underlying diagnosis that meets criteria for admission to the facility; (2) their judgment that the underlying diagnosis creates a substantial risk of future sexual violence to members of the community; and (3) the justifications for social control of sexual behavior that does not conform to community expectations.

The **Psychiatric Definition of Sexually Violent Person** in the Federal Courts Act, 1994, describes the term as any individual suffering from a mental disorder or mental health condition, including a pervasive and significant disorder of behavior or emotional functioning, that significantly impairs the ability to control sexual behavior.

**Mandatory Community Treatment Facility**

A defendant who is convicted of a sexually violent person act must be committed to a mandatory community treatment facility. This facility is intended as an overview of the law as it exists, and not as a defense or a critique of the law.

**Sex Offender Registration**

Registrants are required to register their address with the local police department within 48 hours of being notified of their registration requirements by the department. The registration requirements include reporting to a designated location at least once a month, notifying the police of any changes in their居住地址, and providing a photograph.

**Community Protection Model**

This community protection model also reflects the conclusion of nine expert groups that the high risk in sex offenders is a combination of social factors, including massive abuse in their early lives, and massive harm caused by sexual violence committed by the perpetrator.

**Risk Management**

Risk management is a dynamic process that involves the assessment and management of risk factors. It is a systematic approach to identifying, evaluating, and responding to risk in order to minimize harm.

**Germany**

**German Penal Code (StGB)**

Current German law regarding sex offenders falls under the German Penal Code (StGB; Chapter 13: §§ 174-184c).

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