

2018

Human "Being"

Laura Spitz

University of New Mexico - School of Law

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/law_facultyscholarship



Part of the [Indian and Aboriginal Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Laura Spitz, *Human "Being"*, Interview by Songhees Nation: Human "Being" (2018).

Available at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/law_facultyscholarship/707

This Video is brought to you for free and open access by the UNM School of Law at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Scholarship by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu, lsloane@salud.unm.edu, sarahrk@unm.edu.

Conference: <https://hcmc.uvic.ca/songheesconference/>
Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/235647354>

Conference: First Nations, Land, and James Douglas: Indigenous and Treaty Rights in the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, 1849-1864

By Laura Spitz

**Songhees Wellness Centre in Victoria
February 24-26th 2017**

In this summary, Professor Spitz discusses how the Douglas Treaties acknowledged Aboriginal title when negotiations with Indigenous populations when purchasing land. She looks at how what the definition of “human being” is during the 18th century and how Douglas’ respect of Aboriginal land title also indicated he was these people as people. This diverges from categorizations surrounding the term *Indian*, and its implication that populations were subhuman and/or a different species.

Douglas is still embedded in a larger social and legal structure even as he understands indigenous populations as human when it comes to resources and allocations. Where the white, colonial legal field is assigning human-ness based on legal definitions, the Coast Salish nations understand human-ness as in yourself. Where those who are legally human believe they are owed something, the belief of innate human-ness corresponds to an obligation to all living things.