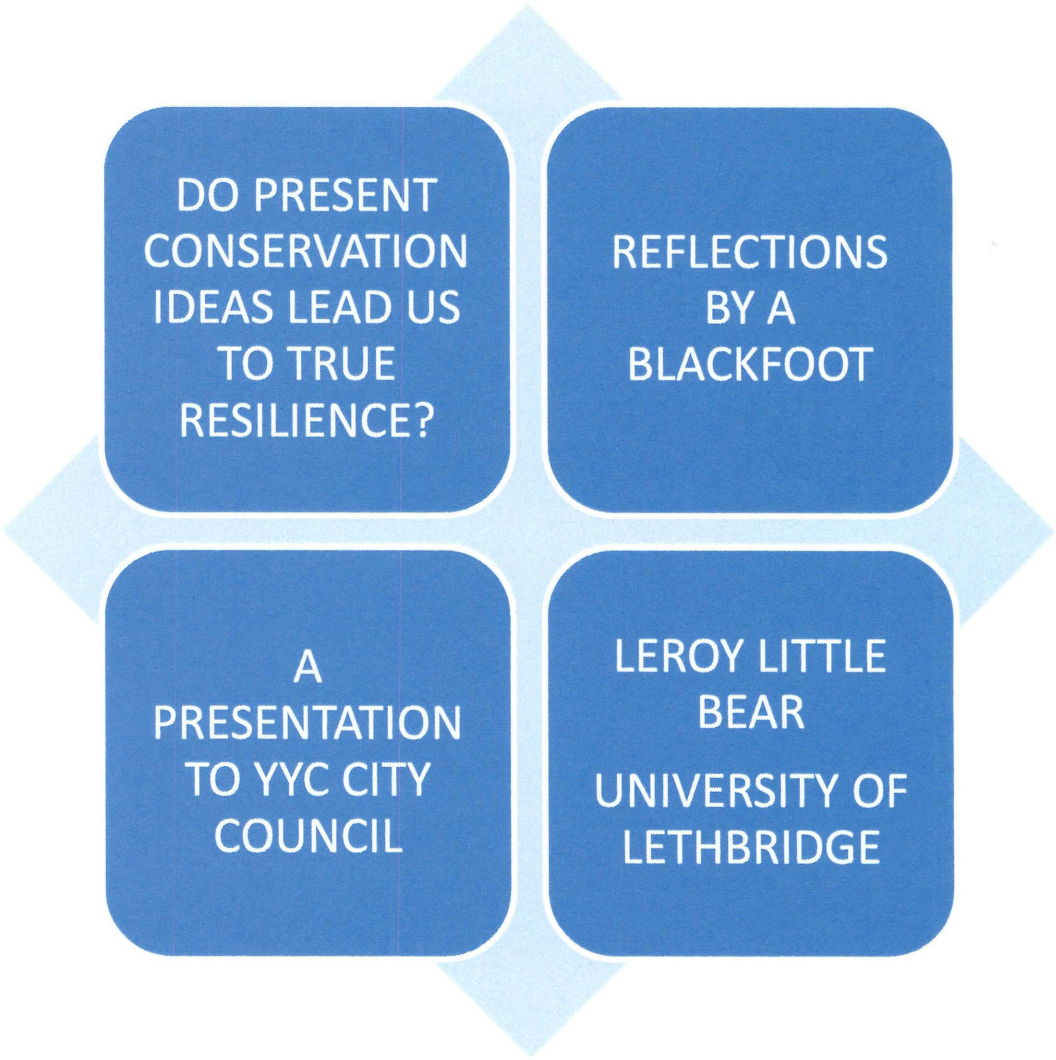


METAPHYSICS:  
INTERSECTING  
WESTERN AND  
NATIVE IDEAS  
***RESILIENCE  
FROM A  
BLACKFOOT  
PERSPECTIVE***

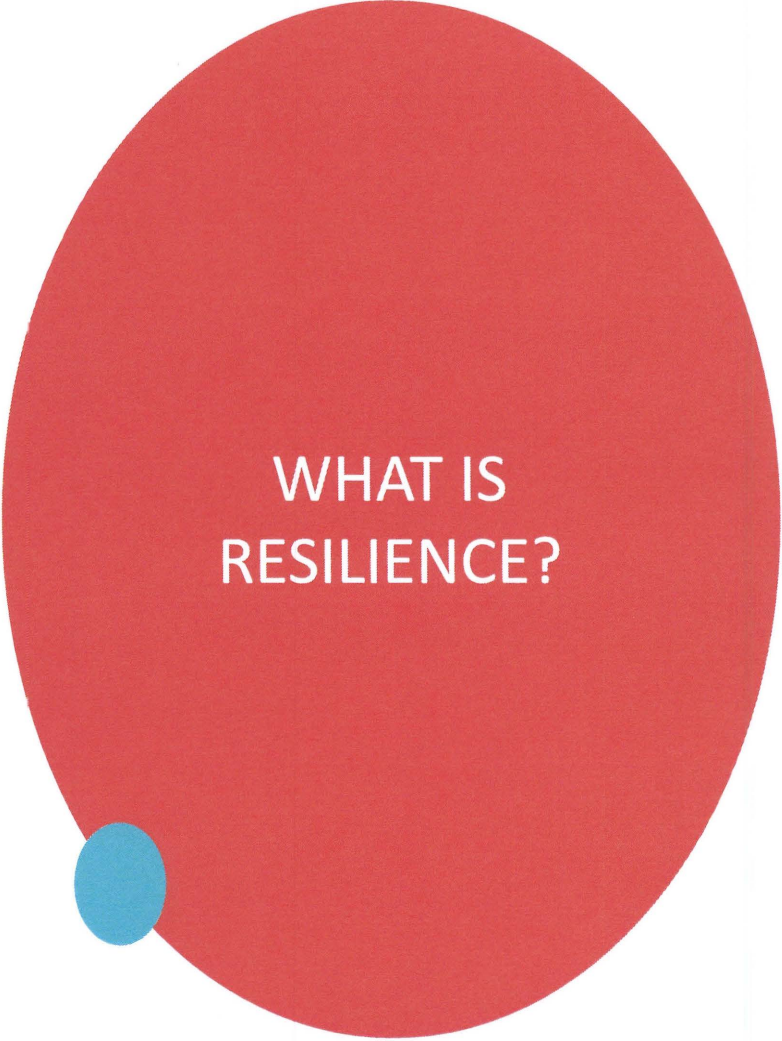


DO PRESENT  
CONSERVATION  
IDEAS LEAD US  
TO TRUE  
RESILIENCE?


REFLECTIONS  
BY A  
BLACKFOOT

A  
PRESENTATION  
TO YYC CITY  
COUNCIL

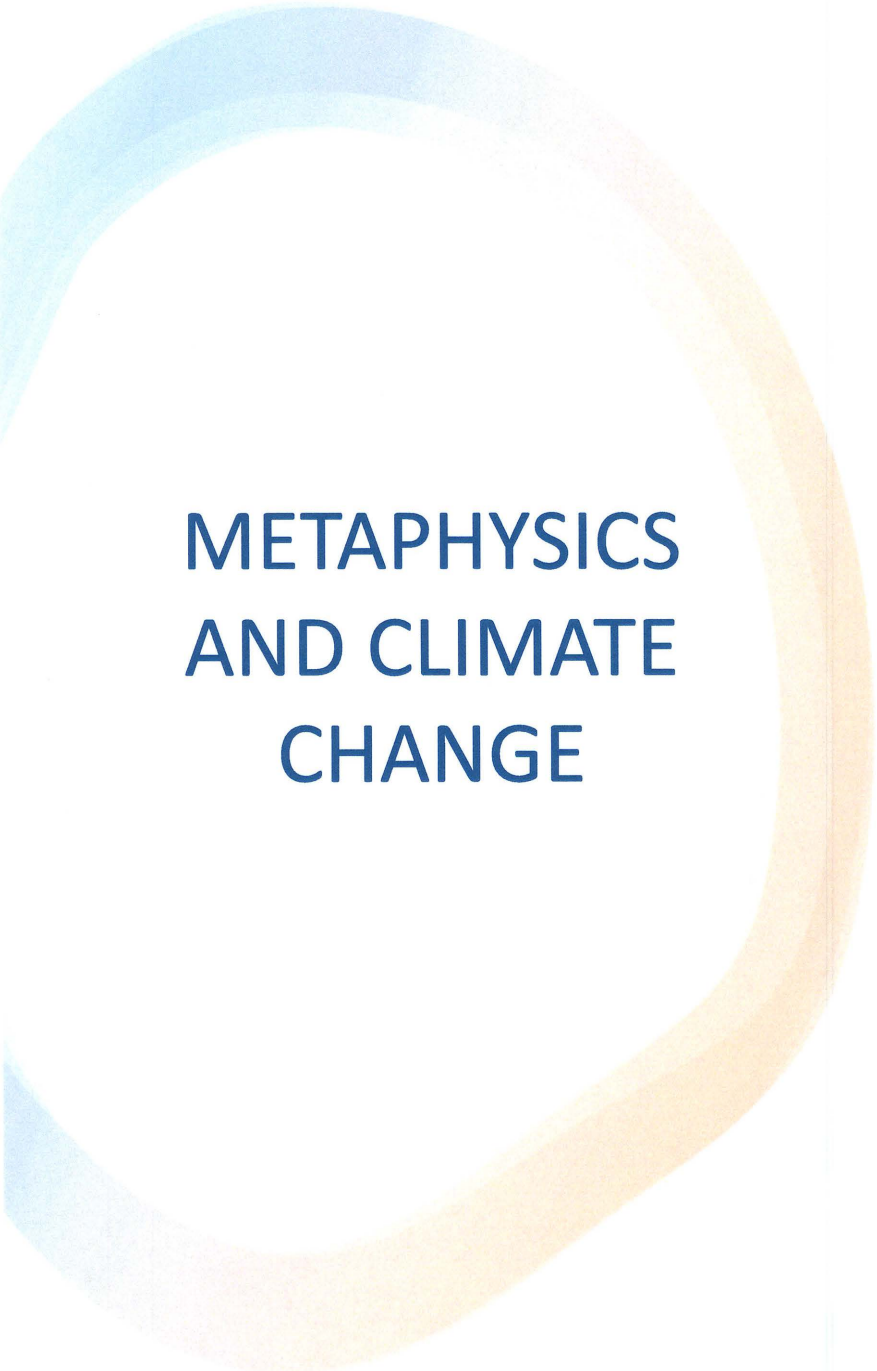
LEROY LITTLE  
BEAR  
UNIVERSITY OF  
LETHBRIDGE



## WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

- I, GENERALLY, UNDERSTAND RESILIENCE AS THE ABILITY TO WITHSTAND ADVERSITY AND BOUNCE BACK FROM DIFFICULT HAPPENNINGS, SOMETIMES ACCOMPANIED BY A BIT OF 'MACHO-NESS' ..... 'WE CAN. WITHSTAND'.
- 



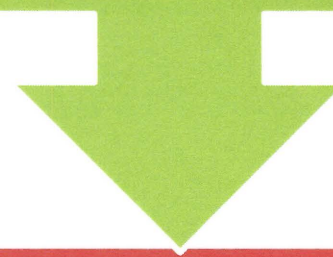


# METAPHYSICS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- METAPHYSICS ARE OUR TOOLS FOR REALITY STRUCTURING. ALL SOCIETIES, AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, CLAIM A TERRITORY. WITHIN THAT TERRITORY, THROUGH THE TOTALITY OF THEIR RELATIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT, COME UP WITH AN INTERPRETIVE TEMPLATE AS TO HOW TO STRUCTURE REALITY, RESULTING IN LIFE-WAYS WE CALL CUSTOMS.

# METAPHYSICS AND CLIMATE CHANGE CHANGE

ALONG WITH CUSTOMS COME  
SOCIAL VALUES. THEY ACT AS  
GOALS TO REACH FOR AND AS  
STANDARDS FOR NORMS.



METAPHYSICS, CUSTOMS, AND  
VALUES ARE ALL CLOSELY RELATED  
AND ALL HAVE IMPLICATIONS AND  
RAMIFICATIONS FOR THE  
NOTIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



# WESTERN METAPHYSICAL PARADIGMS

PERCEPTUAL  
STAGNATION: 'This is the  
way God made it...His  
work is perfect'

EXISTENCE CONSISTS OF  
MATTER: Space is a place  
for material objects that  
humans can sense

MOST EVERYTHING IN  
THE COSMOS IS  
INANIMATE EXCEPT  
HUMANS & ANIMALS

TO COME TO KNOW WE  
MUST ISOLATE





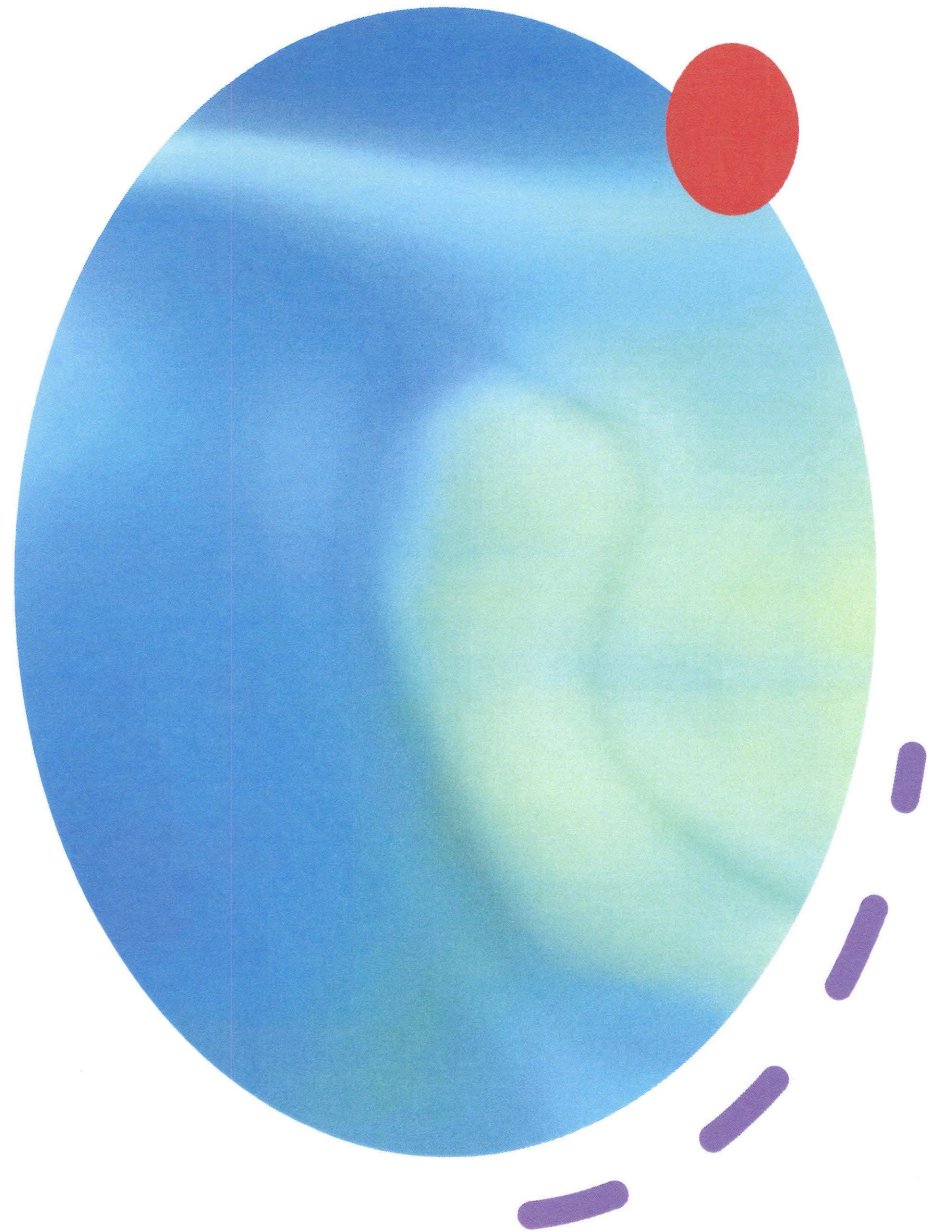
# WESTERN METAPHYSICAL PARADIGMS

ONCE KNOWN, ONE CAN MOVE ON:  
'Been there, done did it'

MAIN REFERENCE POINT IS 'TIME'.

SOCIAL VALUE RAMIFICATIONS: Bigger,  
faster, newer, higher, singularity, linearity

A PRODUCT OF WESTERN PARADIGMS IS:  
AGE OF REASON







# APPLICATION OF WESTERN THOUGHT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- When we are talking about climate change, we are talking ecological balance.
- Ecological relations speaks to balancing ecosystems, wildlife populations and biodiversity of the landscape.
- When we talk 'climate change' we usually come at it from a utilitarian perspective. A utilitarian perspective usually looks at everything from the greatest happiness it will bring to mankind. It never looks at it things from the benefit it might bring to the land or the animals, or the plant life.





# APPLICATION OF WESTERN THOUGHT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

---

- Calgary is to be congratulated for all the little things it is doing to counter climate change. The totality of those little things do amount to quite a bit. But they are patch work approaches.
- For comparison, let's look at Blackfoot metaphysics and climate change.



# BLACKFOOT PARADIGM

- BLACKFOOT METAPHYSICS INCLUDE NOTIONS OF FLUX(EVERYTHING EVERYTHING IS FOREVER IN MOTION), EXISTENCE CONSISTS OF ENERGY WAVES (AS OPPOSED TO MATTER), EVERYTHING IS ANIMATE, EXISTENCE IS A WEB OF RELATIONSHIPS, RENEWAL AND MAINTENANCE OF THOSE CONDITIONS AND FACTORS THAT MAKE FOR THE PRESENT REALITY AND WITHOUT WHICH HUMANS CANNOT SURVIVE AS A SPECIES, SUSTAINING THE LAND UPON WHICH THE PRESENT HUMAN REALITY DEPENDS ON, AND LANGUAGE, LASTLY, ACTS AS A REPOSITORY FOR THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ARISES OUT OF THOSE METAPHYSICS.



# APPLICATION OF BLACKFOOT METAPHYSICS TO CLIMATE CHANGE

---

All of existence is animate. It is about 'all my relations'. I need 'all my relatives', and they need me. It is all about reciprocity

---

Existence is a web of relationships: what you do to the land, to the animals, to the water, you do to yourself. If you respect your relatives, they will respect you. It is all about good relationships.





# APPLICATION OF BLACKFOOT METAPHYSICS TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- How are some of these relationships established?
- Focus on cultural keystone species such as the Buffalo. The Buffalo is an eco-engineer and a sustenance provider. Our songs, our stories, and our ceremonies are very closely related to the Buffalo. Through its eco-engineering of the landscape the Buffalo has taught us many lessons about the land, plants, and other animals.
- Learning our spiritual responsibility to the eco-system. That responsibility includes learning about plant and animal communities, and their lifeways. We talk and sing to them. They teach us songs. Many ceremonies are specific to places, to animals, and to plants.



# NATIVE THOUGHT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- OUR PEOPLE, OUR ELDERS ALWAYS REMIND US ABOUT THINKING OF OUR CHILDREN 7 GENERATIONS INTO THE FUTURE. A GENERATION, IN TERMS OF TIME, IS ABOUT 30 YEARS. SO, WE ARE TALKING 210 YEARS. IN OTHER WORDS, HOW IS WHAT WE DO TODAY GOING TO AFFECT OUR CHILDREN 210 YEARS FROM NOW? NOW, THAT IS 'SUSTAINABILITY'!





# WESTERN AND NATIVE SCIENCE

---

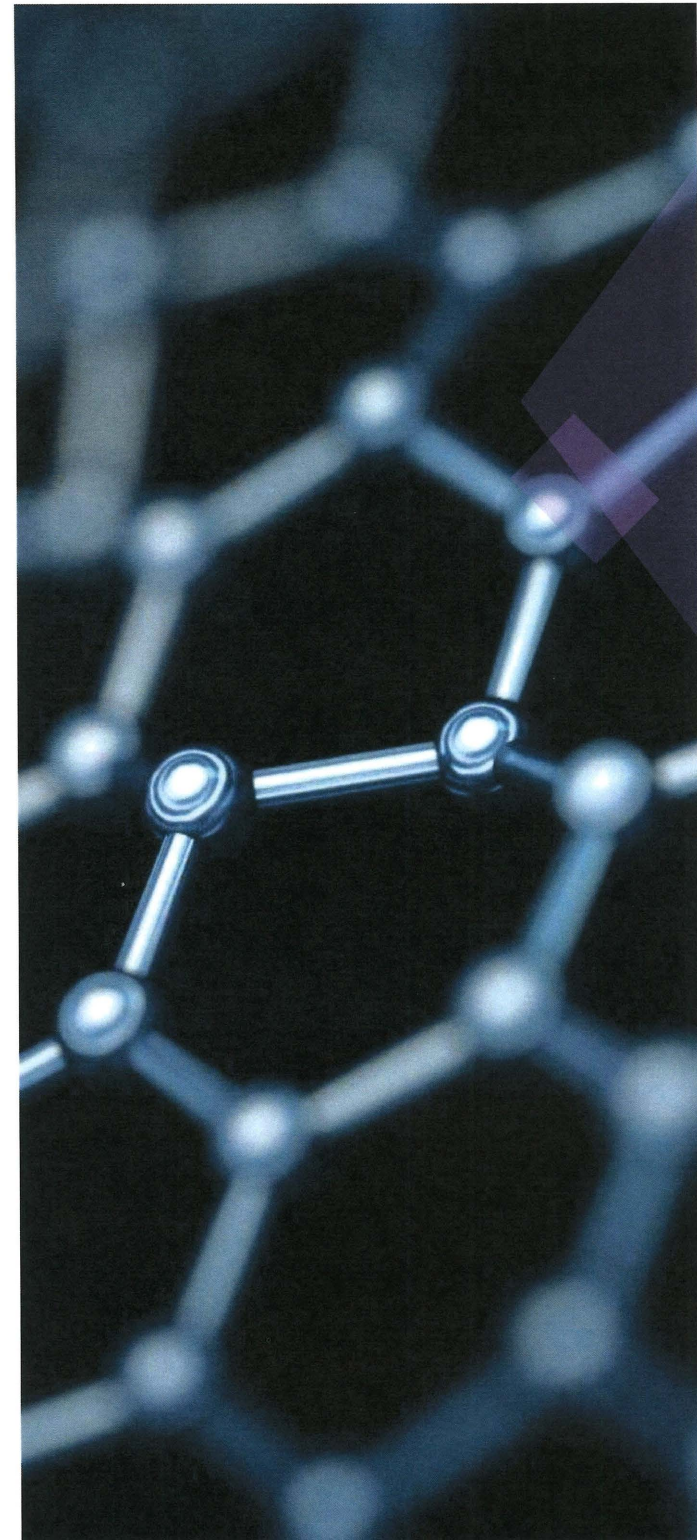
The lesson to be learned is that we live in a very narrow spectrum of ideal conditions: conditions required for our existence. If we are going to survive as a species, we must maintain and renew those conditions. Otherwise, we will be part of a passing phase!

---

What is missing right now, in a Western dominated world, is 'ceremony' and respect for the environment and ecological balance.

---

The road to true resilience is 'education'; making Calgarians know that climate change is for real. That if we are going to reach our goal of zero emission, we have to to change our thinking; we have to go through a paradigm shift. If we don't, little patch jobs won't accomplish the task.





# TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The TRC provides to all of us a 'wake up call'.

Reconciliation requires a synergetic approach to relationships. It cannot be an imbalanced approach.

It is time to take a hard look at our 'standard models': where are they taking us?

TRC allows us the luxury of stopping to reflect.

And now Covid-19 is giving us another chance to reflect.

So, when we are talking climate change, let's engage in spiritual responsibility and sing and talk to "all our relations".





CITY OF CALGARY  
**RECEIVED**  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

APR 26 2022

ITEM: 2 - Opening remarks

distribution.

CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT