Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Social Work

of

IAN SCOTT

BSW (Lakehead University, 2013)
BA (University of Winnipeg, 2008)

“Adult Palliative Care Providers and Their Interactions with Children”

School of Social Work

Thursday, October 8, 2015
9:30AM
David Turpin Building
Room A132

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Susan Strega, School of Social Work, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Kelli Stajduhar, School of Nursing, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Anne Bruce, School of Nursing, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Helen Kurki, Department of Anthropology, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Health care providers (HCPs) who work in adult palliative care occasionally encounter children who have a parent who is dying. This grounded theory (GT) study examines how adult palliative care providers respond to the needs of children who have a parent in palliative care. I use Adele Clarke’s (2005) situational analysis method, a postmodern iteration of GT. Clarke’s situational map acts as an analytical tool to identify and analyze different actors and elements in the situation of concern. Five semi structured qualitative interviews were conducted with adult palliative care providers. Provisional theorizing resulted in three sub processes emerging from the data. First, adult palliative care providers must be cautious when identifying and responding to the needs of children who have a parent in palliative care, particularly because of the nefarious presence of dominant grief discourse (DGD). Second, these same adult palliative care providers, who are often distressed when supporting children who have a dying parent, benefit when they get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Third, adult palliative care providers tend to see themselves as part of a larger multidisciplinary team that informs their interactions with children who have a parent in palliative care. The entire analysis is imbued with a critical perspective of DGD, including its race, gender and class dimensions. This critique of DGD is informed by Foucauldian interpretations of discourse, power and subjectivity. Opportunities for resistance and social justice are explored. In accordance with my own research paradigm, I make a concerted effort to render my influence as a researcher visible throughout.