506:401:02: History Seminar:
Children in Danger: Abduction, Abandonment, Adoption
Professor Judith Surkis
Monday, 9.50-12.50
Location: AB-3450- CAC Campus

From Mary Rowlandson’s captivity narrative to Madonna’s transnational adoptions, by way of
the Victorian orphanage, figures of uprooted children condense cultural and political anxieties
of displacement, relocation, and recomposition. Mythologized and sensationalized stories of
children’s abandonment, abduction, and adoption illustrate how family lives are affected by
global processes and politics. They simultaneously show how global emotions— from fondness
to fear— are animated by the figure of the child. Based on select case studies and your own
research project, this seminar allows students to explore global histories of humanitarianism
and human rights, kinship and migration, violence and social justice, religion and race.