Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are writing to you to describe the research we are conducting at the Ann Arbor Hands on Museum as part of a University of Michigan project on how children learn and reason with categories. We are very pleased to have the cooperation and support of the staff at the Ann Arbor Hands on Museum and hope that you will give us your support.

This particular research is designed to investigate how children reason about individuals who endorse or violate typical behaviors. Participation in the study is completely voluntary (on the part of you and your child) and your child may withdraw from participation at any time. Children will be seen individually for one 5-10 minute session. All responses will be stored electronically. Participation will be at the Ann Arbor Hands on Museum during business hours. Your child will be shown pictures of two groups of fictional cartoon characters. Each group will be presented as engaging in a specific activity (e.g., Hibbles eat orange berries. Glerks eat green berries). Your child will then be shown individual characters who either engage in a same-group activity (e.g., Look, this Hibble is eating orange berries) or an other-group activity (e.g., Look, this Hibble is eating green berries). We will then ask whether it is good or bad for the character to engage in the same- or other-group activity, and will then ask your child to explain their reasoning. With your permission, we will audio record your child’s responses. This audio recording will not be linked to any identifying information and will be stored in a secure lab space.

All responses will be kept confidential. We plan to publish the results of this study, but will not include any information that would identify you or your child. It is important to point out that this is basic research in cognitive development. We do not evaluate individual children's performance. Rather, we are interested in children as a group in order to discover how individuals of different ages learn and reason about social categories. The risks and discomforts posed to participants are minimal and are no more than those encountered on a daily basis. There are no direct benefits to the participants. However children generally enjoy looking at pictures and sharing their knowledge with the researcher.

Please feel free to call us at 734-763-3065 or by e-mail (sothello@umich.edu or gelman@umich.edu) if you have any questions about the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the University of Michigan Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, 2800 Plymouth Rd., Building 520, Room 1169, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2800, (734)-936-0933. To indicate your consent for your child to participate, please sign the participation consent slip below and return it to your child’s teacher as soon as possible. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Susan Gelman, Ph.D.
Professor, Psychology Department

Steven Roberts, Ph.D. Candidate
Graduate Student, Psychology Department
# Return Slip

Child’s Name: ____________________________ Birth Date _____/_____/_____

Child’s Race/Ethnicity: ___________________________

Please sign below if you are willing to have your child participate in this study.

- [ ] YES. My child has permission to participate.
- [ ] YES. I give permission to have my child’s responses audio recorded.
- [ ] NO. My child does not have permission to participate.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

___________________________________________________ Date: ___________

Email (to receive an abstract of our completed study): __________________________

Study: Roberts: “social cognition”