This episode of CHC offers an extended two-part conversation with André Turmel, professor emeritus at Laval University in Quebec City and author of the 2008 book *A Historical Sociology of Childhood*.

Turmel begins by summarizing how he came to the historical sociology of childhood. He gained his commitment to history while studying at the University of Provence Aix Marseille I, where Annalists historians such as Georges Duby and Paul Veyne were linked to the sociologists who trained him. He saw childhood has an area that needed sociological attention, noting that for most of the twentieth-century sociologists focused upon the family, leaving childhood to the psychologists. Citing the examples of Talcot Parsons and Pierre Bourdieu, Turmel claims that until quite recently, leading sociologists have uncritically imported developmental psychology into sociological theory.

In response, Turmel developed an historical sociology of childhood by drawing upon some of the ideas of Bruno Latour, and building on the insights of the physician and historical philosopher Georges Canguilhem’s post-WWII work on the normal and the pathological.

His research utilizes precise analytic concepts, but these are fashioned through detailed archival efforts. Most of our conversation focused upon Turmel’s key concepts for investigating modern childhood: “graphic visualization,” “the normal child,” and “developmental thinking as a cognitive form.”

**Select Works by André Turmel:**