

## **Selected Clips from the Louis Armstrong Jazz Oral History Project The New York Public Library**

### **Video Gallery Clip Transcript: Warren Smith**

Originally there was a method of holding the sticks which we call the orthodox grip, the left hand was held with the stick here between the thumb and the finger and then these two first fingers wrapped over the stick and then the under two, the lower two fingers, the smaller two on the left hand simply to support it. The reason why this happened is because in march drumming the snare drum always tilted because it was hung from a sling around your shoulder so when you walked the drum tilted this way, if you were going to play the natural grip it would necessitate your raising your arm, something like this in order to keep the playing surface level when you approached it with your stick. However since drummers now put the snare drum itself on a mounted stand and they can regulate the angle, it's no longer necessary for this particular technique to be used, however because of tradition most people still use this. However, I teach my students presently to use the match grip because all other percussion instruments are played exactly with this grip, the merimba, the xylophone, the tympani and when you play cymbal rolls in a symphony orchestra, you don't play them like this, you play them this way.