

# LIVING TREASURE

Suzanne Arms

Internationally acclaimed author, photojournalist, visionary, and activist **Suzanne Arms** has been a leader of the natural-birthing movement in the US for more than 30 years. Her second book, *Immaculate Deception: A New Look at Women and Childbirth*, stirred a national movement of social change and became a *New York Times* "Best Book of the Year" in 1975, when her daughter Molly was four years old. The 1975 edition sold more than 250,000 copies.

It was Molly's traumatic birth, in 1970, that had ignited Arms's passionate advocacy. She founded the country's second out-of-hospital birth center, and the first resource center for pregnancy, birth, and early parenting. She researched, developed, and taught the first course on the evolution of childbirth practices around the world. In 1977, Arms was appointed to the State Birth Practices Committee by the governor of California, and was a founding member of the Plane Tree Model Hospitals project in San Francisco. In that year she also made her debut as a filmmaker, writing and directing *Five Women, Five Births*, a film about choices.

Arms also wrote and directed the film *Giving Birth* (2008). Her books include *A Season To Be Born* (Harper, 1973), *To Love and Let Go* (Knopf, 1983), *Adoption: A Handful of Hope* (Celestial Arts, 1990), and, with Chloe Fisher and Mary Renfrew, *Bestfeeding* (Ten Speed Press, 2004). In August 1995, Arms received the coveted Lamaze International Lifetime Achievement Award for her outstanding contributions on behalf of mothers, babies, and families.

In 2003, Arms cofounded Birthing the Future, a member-supported nonprofit advocacy group committed to transforming how society cares for every mother-baby pair, beginning at conception. Among their projects are making films, sponsoring international symposia, and training professional Birth Advocates to transform birth in their communities.

Suzanne Arms lives in southern Colorado and loves being a grandmother.



JESSICA ENGLISH