

Diana Raab.

Laughter at Esalen

The lodge is filled
with as many laughs
as styles of underwear—
a colorful assortment of skimpy,
baggy, appealing, and sexy,
displayed as chuckles, cackles,
annoying, silly, fake, squeaky and leaky.

Like viruses, the contagion creeps
up on you, sending the weak-bladdered
souls dashing to the WC as I did
once in college when studying
too late into the night, slurping
black coffee between spontaneous
eruptions of endless laughter until
the entire dorm chimed in.

The good and bad of it is that we're all born
and die with the same laugh
expulsions of mirth pleasure and joy,
yet no matter how much
we might try to change it,
through surgery or exchange,
we cannot obliterate
this mark stamped upon us
ever since our very first push
into this world.

So here's the question—
what if you detest your laugh,
could you exchange it with a parent, loved one
or friend and if yes, how does such a process
begin, what authority would you call? A doctor?
A lawyer? A God? A spirit? A comedian?
A Policeman?
I only ask because I hate mine and yesterday
I could not stop laughing.

