

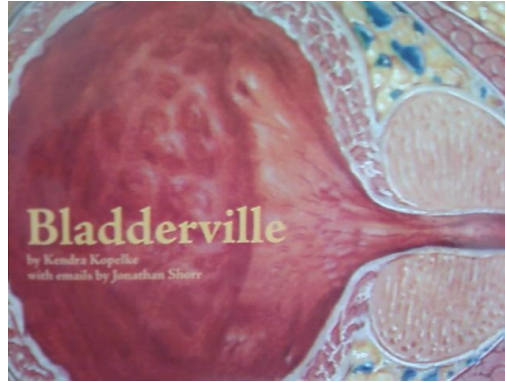
POINTING THE FINGER

The bladder is not
to blame,
the mitamycin
is to blame,
and before that,
the BCG,
or bovine tuberculosis,
and before that,
cancer,
and before that
the doctor who diagnosed
you and before that
the other doctor
who missed the
diagnosis,
and before that
radon, grilling, Baltimore,
and before that
me, of course,
and before that,
family history,
dumb luck,
the country we swim in
pumped full of chemicals.
My finger is almost as
red and tired as your bladder
having pointed itself to death.
It has poked suspiciously
at the poisonous world,
taken inventory
even in my sleep,
testing each thing to see
which makes the most sense,
looking for the foot
that fits this shoe.
What or who did this to you?
Oh, but I wonder,
what is the point?
To increase suffering?
Invite more guilt?
Deepen regret?
If only you hadn't worked
in the leather factory?
But you never worked
in the leather factory!
If only you *had* worked
in the leather factory
and smoked a few cigarettes
along the way,
so we could, for that brief
surreal stint in the doctor's
tiny cockpit, sigh
ohhhh that
before taking off
to points unknown.

Kendra Kopelke

“BLADDERVILLE”

by Kendra Kopelke
with emails by Jonathon Shorr



Bladderville is a book of poems written by Kendra Kopelka, wife of Jonathon Shorr, a bladder cancer survivor.

Her book is on sale for \$20—[click here](#) to order your copy today.

Kendra Kopelke is the author of two collections of poetry, *Eager Street* and *Carpe Diem, Ants*, and co-author of *When Divas Dance*, an anthology of poems by three women. Her poems have appeared in numerous literary journals and anthologies.

She directs the MFA in Creative Writing & Publishing Arts at the University of Baltimore, where she is co-editor and co-founder of *Passager*, a national literary journal for older writers.

Jonathan Shorr directs the University of Baltimore's School of Communications Design. In addition to being a writer, he consults on issues relating to media literacy and the psycho-social effects of the mass media.”