

# Guide to the Ann Petry Manuscripts

JWJ MSS 206



Gabriela G. Redwine

2019

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** JWJ MSS 206

**CREATOR:** Petry, Ann, 1908-1997

**TITLE:** Ann Petry manuscripts

**DATES:** circa 1944-1947

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3.25 linear feet (4 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The Ann Petry Manuscripts contains the writings of American author Ann Petry. Writings consist of drafts of Petry's novels *Country Place* (1947) and *The Street* (1946), some with extensive revisions. Some draft pages were written on the back of Negro Women, Incorporated, newsletters and governance documents. Also included are drafts of Petry's review of Margaret Halsey's *Color Blind: A White Woman Looks at the Negro* (1946). Correspondence consists of a carbon copy of Petry's 1944 submission to the Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Contest.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.petry>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.petry>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Frances K. Reckling, 1947, and Ann Petry, 1948.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

This collection may be housed off-site at Yale's Library Shelving Facility (LSF). To determine if all or part of this collection is housed off-site please check the library's online catalog, Orbis; material for which the location is given as "LSF" must be requested 36 hours in advance. Please consult with Beinecke Access Services for more information.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Ann Petry Manuscripts is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Ann Petry Manuscripts. James Weldon Johnson Collection in the Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Processing Information

The Ann Petry Manuscripts contains material acquired by the library through gift from Frances K. Reckling, 1947, and Ann Petry, 1948.

Former call numbers: JWJ MSS Petry and Za Petry.

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## Related Materials

Additional material by and about Ann Petry can be found in the Ann Petry collection at the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center at Boston University.

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## Biographical / Historical

Ann Lane Petry, born 12 October 1908 in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, was the daughter of Peter Clark Lane and Bertha James Lane. She graduated from Connecticut College of Pharmacy in 1931 and worked in her family's business for several years. She married George Petry in 1936, and in 1938 they moved to Harlem, where she was actively engaged in literature, theatre, and politics. She wrote a weekly column for *The People's Voice*, attended Mabel Louise Robinson's creative writing workshop at Columbia University, and co-founded Negro Women, Incorporated, which was a consumer watch group that fought for the rights of African-American women and organized them for participation in the war effort. In 1945 she won the Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Award, which funded the writing of *The Street*. In 1947 she and her husband moved back to Old Saybrook. Ann Petry authored short stories, novels, book reviews, and books for young readers. Her published works include *The Street* (1946), *Country Place* (1947), and *The Narrows* (1953). Ann Petry died on April 28, 1997, in Old Saybrook.

Sources: Farah Jasmine Griffin. *Harlem Nocturne: Women Artists and Progressive Politics During World War II*. New York : Basic Civitas, A Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2013. "Harlem." Story of the Week. Library of America, 2019. <http://storyoftheweek.loa.org/2019/02/harlem.html>

## Scope and Contents

The Ann Petry Manuscripts contains the writings of American author Ann Petry. Writings consist of drafts of Petry's novels *Country Place* (1947) and *The Street* (1946), some with extensive revisions. Some draft pages were written on the back of Negro Women, Incorporated, newsletters and governance documents. Also included are drafts of Petry's review of Margaret Halsey's *Color Blind: A White Woman Looks at the Negro* (1946). Correspondence consists of a carbon copy of Petry's 1944 submission to the Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Contest.

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## Arrangement

Organized into one series: I. Writings, circa 1944-1947

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Writings, circa 1944-1947, Bulk, 1944–1947

Series I, Writings, consists of drafts for *Country Place* (1947), *The Street* (1946), and a review of Margaret Halsey's book *Color Blind* (1946). Some of the drafts are hand-written (holograph) and signed, and many of them are heavily corrected. In some cases, draft pages are written on the back of newsletters and governance documents for Negro Women, Inc.

<i>Country Place</i> (1947)		
b. 1, f. 1-2	Early autograph draft, revised (4 notebooks) <i>2 folders</i>	undated
b. 1, f. 3-4	Original typescript draft (incomplete), revised <i>2 folders</i>	undated
b. 1, f. 5	Original typescript and autograph draft (incomplete), corrected and revised	undated
b. 1, f. 6-8	Setting typescript, corrected, with editorial marks <i>3 folders</i>	undated
b. 2, f. 1-2	Working material and draft fragments <i>2 folders</i>  Oversized pages replaced with preservation copies; originals are housed in Box 4 (Oversize) and available for use.	undated
b. 4, f. 1	Original oversized pages removed from <i>Country Place</i>	undated
Review of Margaret Halsey's <i>Color Blind: A White Woman Looks at the Negro</i> (1946)		
b. 2, f. 3	Original typescript draft, corrected and revised. Typed on back of draft pages from <i>Country Place</i>	undated
<i>The Street</i> (1946)		
b. 2, f. 4	Typescript letter (carbon) from Ann Petry to Houghton Mifflin Fellowship Contest, with synopsis of <i>The Street</i>	1944 December 22
b. 2, f. 5-6	Early autograph draft, revised (4 notebooks) <i>2 folders</i>	undated
b. 2, f. 7-8	Original typescript draft (incomplete), corrected and revised <i>2 folders</i>  Oversized pages replaced with preservation copies; originals are housed in Box 4 (Oversize) and available for use.	undated
b. 4, f. 2	Original oversized pages removed from <i>The Street</i>	undated
b. 3, f. 1-3	Original typescript, setting copy, corrected, with editorial marks <i>3 folders</i>	undated
b. 3, f. 4-5	Page proofs <i>2 folders</i>	undated

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

African American authors  
African American women authors  
American literature -- 20th Century  
Authors, American -- 20th Century -- Archives  
Harlem (New York, N.Y.)--Fiction.  
Women authors, American -- 20th Century -- Archives

### **Occupations**

Authors -- United States -- 20th Century

### **Preferred Titles**

*Negro Women, Incorporated*

### **Acquired From**

Petry, Ann, 1908-1997  
Reckling, Frances Kraft