

The Street is a novel published in 1946 by African-American writer Ann Petry. Set in World War II era Harlem, it centers on the life of Lutie Johnson. Petry's novel is a commentary on the social injustices that confronted her character, Lutie Johnson, as a single black mother in this time period. Lutie is confronted by racism, sexism, and classism on a daily basis in her pursuit of the American dream for herself and her son, Bub. Lutie fully subscribes to the belief that if she follows the adages of Benjamin Franklin by working hard and saving wisely, she will be able to achieve the dream of being financially independent and move from the tenement in which she lives on 116th Street. Franklin is embodied in the text through the character Junto, named after Franklin's secret organization of the same name. It is Junto, through his secret manipulations to possess Lutie sexually, who ultimately leads Lutie to murder Junto's henchman, Boots. Junto represents Petry's deep disillusionment with the cultural myth of the American dream.

