



Kathy and his colleagues always had in mind that one day someone would record the history of the liberation movement. While still in prison he assisted Madiba in the creation of the foundation manuscript of his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*. Kathy and Walter Sisulu wrote comments on Madiba's first drafts and his final version was transcribed into tiny handwriting by Lalo Chiba and Mac Mahara. For their trouble they lost their studies for four years after the prison authorities found the drafts, in their hand-writing, buried in canisters. Some months before, in 1976, Mac Mahara was released with the final version concealed in a photograph album.

Later while he and Sisulu shared a cell at Pollsmoor Prison they wrote down the elder man's reminiscences, which later formed the base of *Walter and Albertina Sisulu: In Our Lifetime* by Elinor Sisulu.

"Now there was just nobody in South Africa or anywhere who knew the history of the ANC or the liberation movement as well as Walter did, just nobody," Kathy said.

While he does not regard his four books as the definitive South African history he regards it as "absolutely necessary" that South Africans know the history of their country. "There is much work still to be done -- **"ignorance is our greatest enemy"**" he said.

While he dropped out of school himself to pursue his political aims, he obtained four degrees, all under difficult condition in prison. But it is the youth and their studies about which he is most passionate.

He relates just how difficult it was to study on Robben Island: ***we worked for eight hours a day for 13 years with pick and shovels, limited hours, you come back from work and then there are restrictions, that although the lights are on the whole night you are only going to be able to study for certain hours -***

standard eight you sleep at eight o'clock, standard ten you sleep at ten o'clock, university you sleep at 11. In spite of all that restrictions, under those adverse conditions, people studied. The vast majority did not have money, but they studied, they studied through the help of their fellow, their comrades.

He fears that through their lack of knowledge of South Africa's recent past, the young do not appreciate their opportunities nor the fact that studying is not easy. For them to take advantage of the doors that Kathy and his comrades open, they need to know that it is possible to succeed under adverse conditions.

KATHY THE PEOPLE'S HISTORIAN



Kathy and Mac Mahara



Kathy and Assistant Kimberly



Kathy and Walter Sisulu



- Books published by Kathy:**
- Letters from Robben Island, 1999
 - Memoirs, 2000
 - A Free Mind: Ahmed Kathrada's Notebook from Robben Island, 2005
 - A Simple Freedom: The Strong Mind of Robben Island Prisoner No. 468164, 2008

