

# Planetwalker: 22 Years Of Walking, 17 Years Of Silence

PRESENTED BY YALE FES EQUID  
STUDENT COMMITTEE

BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH  
SPEAKER  
SERIES

CELEBRATING  
BLACK LEADERS  
IN THE  
ENVIRONMENT

DR. JOHN FRANCIS  
*Environmental Activist, Educator, Author and Planetwalker*

FEBRUARY 4TH | 12PM  
195 PROSPECT ST, NEW HAVEN, CT 06511  
BURKE AUDITORIUM THIRD FLOOR

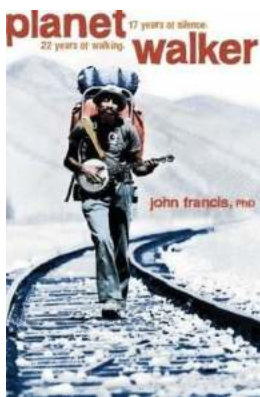
QUESTIONS? EMAIL [DEJA.CURTIS@YALE.EDU](mailto:DEJA.CURTIS@YALE.EDU)

In a world dominated by constant noise and chaos, John Francis embarked on an extraordinary journey that would not only transform his life but also influence the way we perceive the environment. For 22 years, he walked the Earth, spreading

a powerful message about sustainability and inspiring change with his silent presence. This is the captivating story of Planetwalker's remarkable journey.

## Embracing a Different Path

In 1971, John Francis made a bold decision that forever altered the course of his life. In response to a devastating oil spill in the San Francisco Bay, he decided to stop using motorized vehicles and completely rely on his feet as a means of transportation. By doing so, Francis aimed to reduce his ecological footprint and fully immerse himself in the world around him.

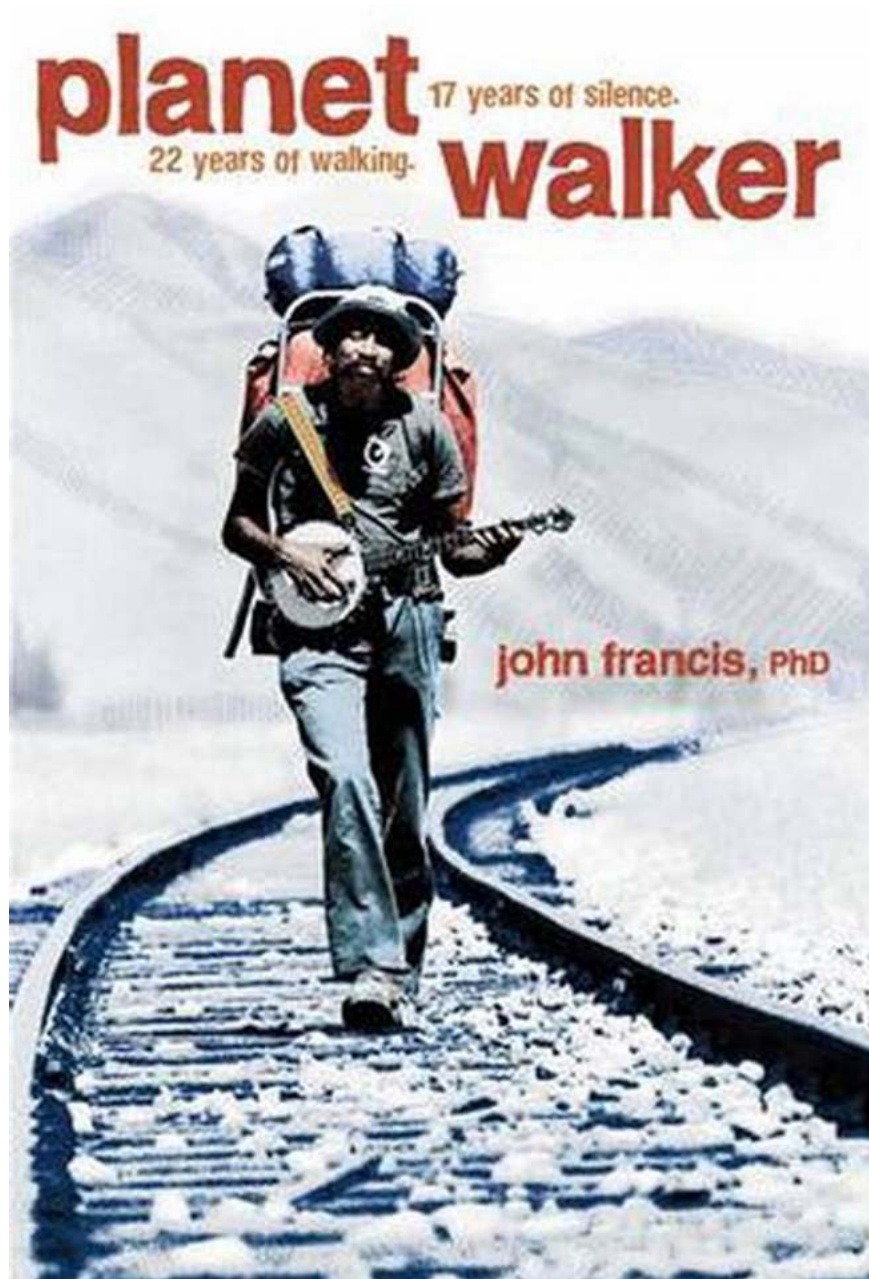


### Planetwalker: 22 Years of Walking. 17 Years of Silence. by Lin-Manuel Miranda (Illustrated Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1474 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 292 pages  
Lending : Enabled



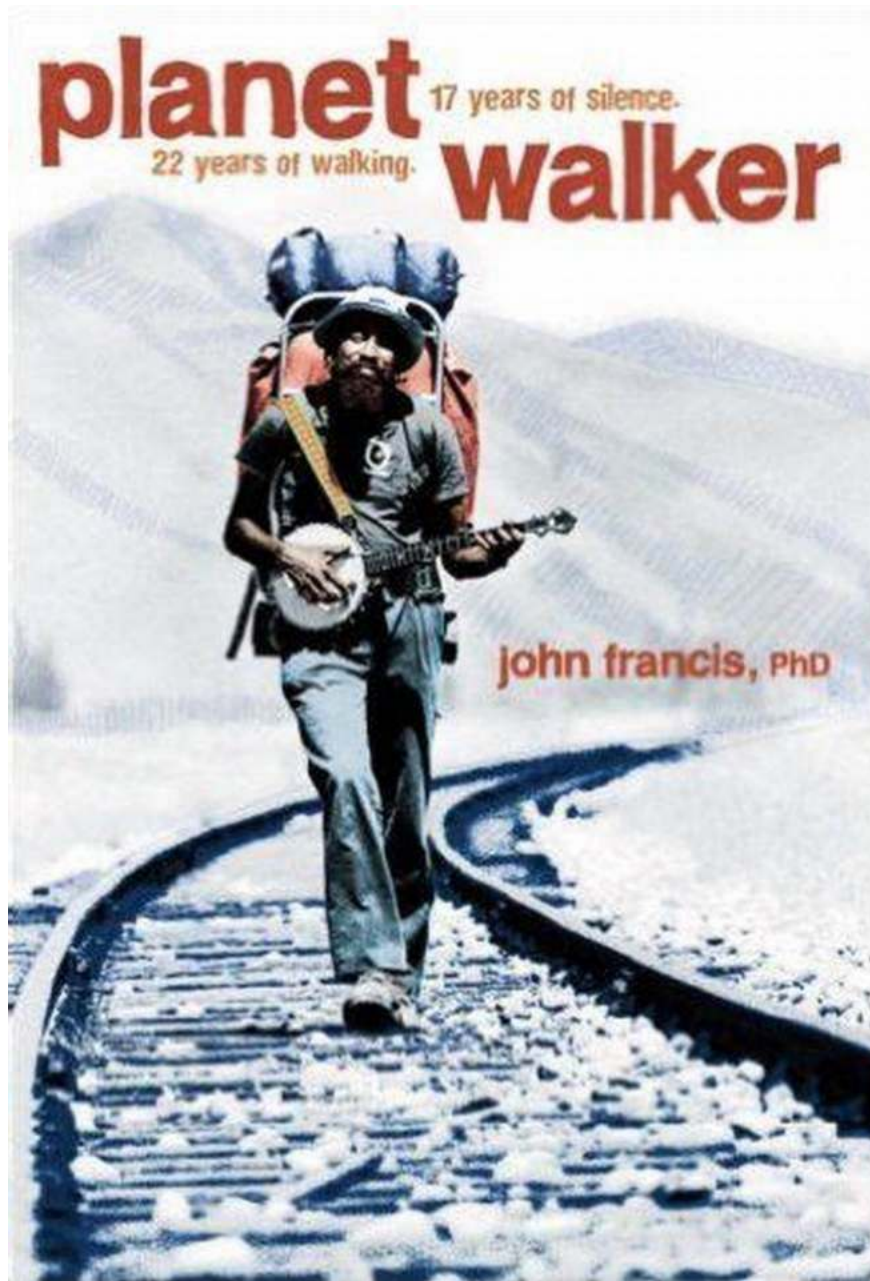


His journey began quietly, walking the streets of San Francisco, but soon extended beyond city borders, encompassing vast stretches of land across North America. As he ventured further, John Francis became increasingly aware of the beauty and fragility of the planet. Witnessing firsthand the impact of human actions on the environment became the driving force behind his mission.

### **A Silent Protest**

As Planetwalker trekked across the continent, he realized that words alone were not enough to make a lasting impact. In 1973, he decided to embrace silence as a form of protest against the apathy surrounding environmental issues. For the next 17 years, Francis refrained from speaking, relying solely on non-verbal communication to engage in conversations and share his message.

The silence became a powerful symbol, drawing attention to the urgency of environmental concerns that often go unheard. By abstaining from speech, Planetwalker encouraged others to listen, reflect, and take action. His silent presence sparked curiosity and opened doors to genuine conversations about the future of our planet.



## **The Impact of Planetwalker**

Planetwalker's journey spanned 22 years, covering over 22,000 miles on foot. Throughout this remarkable odyssey, John Francis encountered individuals from different walks of life, inspiring countless discussions on environmental responsibility and sustainability.



Through his silent activism, Planetwalker seeped into the public consciousness, captivating imaginations and motivating change. His message transcended borders and cultures, proving that the fight for a sustainable future is a universal cause.

## **From Silence to Empowerment**

In 1990, after 17 years of silence, Planetwalker finally broke his vow and spoke again. His voice emerged stronger and more resolute than ever before, continuing his mission to promote environmental consciousness. Besides his walking and public speaking endeavors, Francis pursued a Ph.D. in Environmental Studies. His exceptional journey served as the foundation for his academic work, contributing valuable insights to the field.

## **Continuing the Legacy**

Today, more than four decades after he first embarked on his transformative journey, Planetwalker's legacy lives on. John Francis has become an influential advocate for sustainable living, recognized globally for his dedication to the environment. Through his books, public speeches, and educational initiatives, he continues to inspire individuals to take action and make a difference in their communities.

## Justifying Preferred Mode in Public Speaking

### 1. Extemporaneous Mode

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iNk\\_j3koAY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iNk_j3koAY)

#### Advantage:

- conversational
- spontaneous
- seems effortless
- most flexible
- allows high quality communication
- invites bodily movements gestures and rapid nonverbal responses

#### Disadvantage:

- lots of practice
- different word choices that could change the meaning

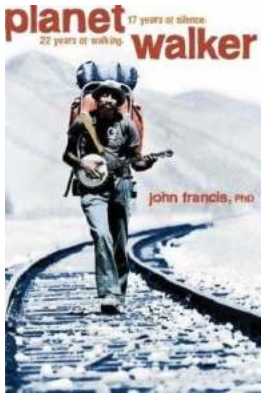
Planetwalker's 22 years of walking and 17 years of silence have left an indelible mark on environmental activism. John Francis's courageous and unconventional approach to spreading awareness about sustainability challenges conventional thinking and encourages us to reassess our relationship with the planet we call home. Planetwalker's journey serves as a testament to the power of silence, determination, and the unwavering commitment to creating a more sustainable world.

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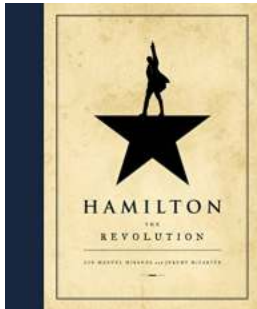
When the struggle to save oil-soaked birds and restore blackened beaches left him feeling frustrated and helpless, John Francis decided to take a more fundamental and personal stand—he stopped using all forms of motorized transportation. Soon after embarking on this quest that would span two decades and two continents, the young man took a vow of silence that endured for 17 years. It began as a silent environmental protest, but as a young African-American man, walking across the country in the early 1970s, his idea of "the environment" expanded beyond concern about pollution and loss of habitat to include how we humans treat each other and how we can better communicate and work together to benefit the earth.

Through his silence and walking, he learned to listen, and along the way, earned college and graduate degrees in science and environmental studies. The United Nations appointed him goodwill ambassador to the world's grassroots communities and the U.S. government recruited him to help address the Exxon Valdez disaster.

Was he crazy? How did he live and earn all those degrees without talking? An amazing human-interest story, with a vital message, Planetwalker is also a deeply personal and engaging coming-of-age odyssey—the positive experiences, the

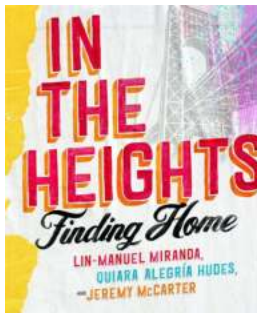


challenging times, the characters encountered, and the learning gained along the way.



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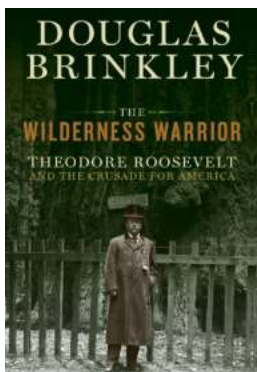
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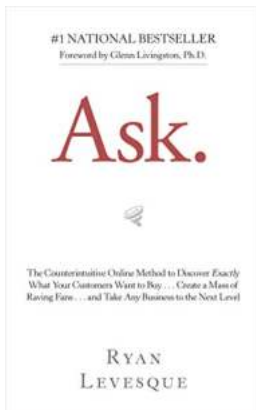
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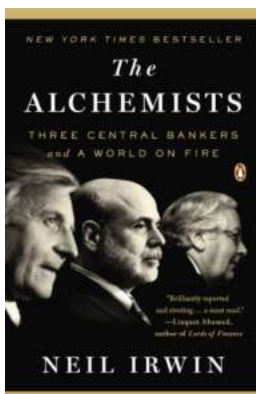
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