

Dan-el Padilla Peralta



Dan-el Padilla Peralta, a Princeton University professor and Columbia University Fellow, came to the United States from the Dominican Republic with his family in 1989. In his memoir, *Undocumented*, and in his lectures, Peralta chronicles his journey from the rough streets of New York City to the top of his class at Princeton, offering an honest and inspiring glimpse of the American immigrant experience. He received his Ph.D. in Classics from Stanford University and is currently a Fellow in the Society of Fellows in the Humanities at Columbia University as well as a Professor of Classics at Princeton.

His memoir, *Undocumented: A Dominican Boy's Odyssey from a Homeless Shelter to the Ivy League*, was published in July 2015. *Undocumented* is a classic story of the triumph of the human spirit. In his keynote talks and presentations, Peralta shares his remarkable journey and highlights the many challenges facing immigrants living in America. Peralta and his family came to the United States legally from Santo Domingo when he was four years old on a six-month temporary visa. When the family's visas lapsed, Peralta's father returned to the Dominican Republic. But Peralta's courageous mother was determined to make a better life for him and his brother. While living in a shelter in downtown Manhattan, Peralta attracted the attention of Jeff, a young volunteer from a wealthy family. With Jeff's help, Peralta was accepted on scholarship to Collegiate, the oldest private school in the country. At Collegiate, Peralta thrived and adeptly navigated the rough streets of Harlem, where he lived with his mother and brother, and the elite halls of his private school, where he soon rose to the top of the class. From there, Peralta went on to Princeton where he continued to thrive and, in 2006, made the momentous decision to come out as an undocumented student.