

NOAH CENTINEO

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After the release of the Netflix hits **To All The Boys I've Loved Before**, **Sierra Burgess is A Loser** and the upcoming rom-com **The Stand In**, Noah Centineo is quickly carving his way to household status, landing him the unexpected title of *The Internet's Boyfriend™*.

The 22-year-old actor first gained recognition when his Instagram numbers sky-rocketed at a never-before seen pace, gaining him an average of over one million followers per day. His numbers climbed at an unprecedented rate from several hundred thousand to 15+ million (and growing) proceeding the release of All The Boys. With engagement statistics that rival (and at times surpass) Instagram supernovas Justin Bieber, Harry Styles and Kylie –averaging 3-4 million likes on a single selfie.

His latest roles help form an emotional bond between the audience, the films and his own persona, seemingly setting the tone for the next gen of young actors to come. Now it appears that the future of positive male role models demoting toxic masculinity lies in the re-enactment of the John Hughes era, with Centineo at the center of that curation.

Early on, Centineo spent most of his time traveling in between Los Angeles and Florida. He started auditioning at the age of six and at barely sixteen of age he chose to pursue acting full time. He credits his confidence to the strong emotional safety net brought to him by his upbringing. “I think both of my parents have a bit of insanity in their genes. The real thing is that they believed in me and I somehow convinced them to believe in me. Through that belief, they’ve supported me in and out,” Centineo says.

Brought up in a middle class family from South Florida, his father owned a coffee shop and then further on pursued a career in the financial sector of the film industry, although having a member of his family involved in the industry didn’t have much of an impact over Centineo’s career. Speaking of his involvement, the actor is adamant over the fact that nepotism certainly didn’t play a part in his rise to success. “I feel a sense of responsibility towards my career that neither one of my parents can touch. I do have a sense of pride about that.”

However, in one instance, the actor did receive a helping hand when he was a preteen, with an independent film called *The Golden Retrievers*. Even though his role wasn’t his breakthrough moment, on an emotional level it, became the foundation of his self-assurance. “I was 11 years old and my father hadn’t been in the industry before. He was a coffee shop owner, he was a minister and he worked in hedge fund management. One day, an opportunity came across his desk to raise money for a film. He’d never done that before. He had no connections in the industry. The production company kept calling him and one day they said ‘Well, we are

doing another film. It’s an independent film and we know your son wants to be an actor. He should come and audition for it.’ I was in my second year at a performing arts school at the time; I was barely getting my feet wet. Basically, my dad said ‘How about we come out to LA, Noah can audition and we can talk more about the project?’ I go out there, I audition, I get a call back and then I fly back home. A couple of days later, I get another call and I end up getting the part. Being the lead in an independent film at 11 and having that experience under my belt was extremely helpful,” Centineo recalls. He is also swift to give credit when credit is due. “If I’m being completely transparent with you, that was the only time in my life I think that my father played a part in my career and I am very grateful for it.”

His perspective on the industry goes back to the way in which he was raised. Centineo’s confidence, self-belief and genuine appreciativeness are firmly rooted in his upbringing. “My parents are the reason that I’ve got the outlook that I have on my life today. They are the reason I’ve got the confidence, whether it was about this film or whether it was because they let me work at their coffee shop when I was 4 years old, teaching me how to do espresso shots and dealing with adults every day. It was all these things that they did to support and love me that made me into who I am today,” Centineo says.

His statements are reminiscent of one of Atticus Finch’s [To Kill A Mockingbird] most famous quotes: “Watch carefully the magic that occurs when you give a person just enough comfort to be themselves.” And that’s precisely the embodiment of Centineo’s persona. Speaking of his nurturing, his comparisons speak volumes. “They treated me like a plant, as they say. Support it, and it will grow in any direction it wants, you just have to be there to make sure it can.”

In spite of his family’s support, Centineo was not shielded from the scrutiny of the film industry. The road to stardom is paved with rejection and the young actor was certainly subject to it. It takes mental strength to power through the naysayers and navigate the trappings of show biz. “If you believe in yourself and you know that you can do something, it doesn’t matter how many people tell you that you can’t do it. For my first pilot season in Los Angeles – I was there for 3 months and auditioned 3 times every single day and I got absolutely no call backs,” Centineo recalls. “Everyone was saying that I didn’t have enough experience. That was the first time I dropped out of school.”

So how did the young actor manage to cope with the cold shoulders of the film industry? For many performers, the key to improvement is the ability to eliminate the emotional burden when leaving an audition room. Centineo takes the notion of ‘letting



coat by KEISER CLARK
shirt by ASOS
jewelry by Title of Work

go’ very literally. “What I do is I walk into a room with my sides in my back pocket. I like to know them thoroughly mentally before I go in. I can’t do it otherwise and I don’t like to do it. You put them in your back pocket, you do your scene, and when you leave the room – that’s what I do – I take the sides out of my pocket and I throw them in the trash. And that is me letting go of it as soon as I leave the room. I literally let go of the audition and do not think about it. I physically and mentally leave it behind,” he explains.

It’s obvious that Centineo is determined. His past rejection transcended into the transformative process that he needed in order to become the talent that he is today. ‘No’ wasn’t an answer

that he was willing to accept. “The bottom line is that you can’t let them say no to you. You have to continue pushing through,” he adamantly states “You have to be able to look at yourself and decide that you’re good. If you believe that you’re talented and that this is what you’re meant to do, you can’t let people say no to you. You just can’t. I’ve had people tell me ‘no’ since I was 8 years old. That might be why I kind of got used to it.” he says. “It really goes back to the way that I was raised, ‘no’ wasn’t an answer that we would accept in our family.” Centineo’s wisdom surfaces swiftly when he speaks of his constant perseverance. “When it comes to something that you really want to do for the rest of your life – fuck everyone else. The world is going to tell you what you’re



sweater by R13
jeans by Hudson Jeans



sweater by Golden Goose
suspenders and pants by ASOS

not right for and you're going to tell the world why they're wrong."

This is precisely what the young actor has cultivated through his latest films. Both *Sierra Burgess Is A Loser* and *To All The Boys I've Loved Before* became massive hits and launched Centineo into heart-stealing status practically overnight. The projects resonate with the public at a high intensity, especially within the young adult market which has been starved for quality content that realistically represents their experiences. For a generation dominated by social media interactions, the films reflect the realities of our society's most poignant issues in terms of personal relations. The overarching message is simple though: be

present. Centineo's characters are pushing the boundaries and demonstrating the opposite of toxic masculinity.

Netflix isn't the only place you've seen Centineo, he's played Camila Cabello's love interest in her 'Havana' music video as well as portraying Jesus on *The Fosters* which now has its own spin-off series *Good Trouble* coming in 2019, where he'll reprise his beloved role. Next he stars in *Swiped* along with the Jackie Chan-directed historical romance *The Diary*, in which he plays a young man in 1930's Shanghai, and it was recently announced he has a key role in the upcoming *Charlie's Angels* reboot. Additionally he has another rom-com in post-production called *The Stand-In*, in



suit by ASOS
shirt by AllSaints
sunglasses by Cutler and Gross
Stan Smith sneakers by Adidas Originals
socks by Pantherella

which he stars alongside *Riverdale*’s Camila Mendes.

“I just feel blessed and I’m going to keep finding projects that push the envelope and not just entertain and normalize ambiguity,” he says. “Projects that change the way our culture views relationships and dynamics. It’s a question of doing things that interest me, doing things that fill me as a person and make me feel empowered.”

Every generation has its iconic romantic comedies--*Breakfast at Tiffany’s*, *Sixteen Candles*, *Sleepless in Seattle*, and over the summer was borne the latest addition to the list of timeless rom-com couples: Lara Jean Covey [Lana Candor] and Peter Kavinsky [Centineo] from *To All The Boys I’ve Loved Before*. Adapted from the novel of the same name, the Netflix film easily became of the most delightful rom-coms in recent memory, making instant household names out of Condor and Centineo. However people are quick to denote rom-coms. Critics worldwide have dismissed the narratives on the basis that they offer unrealistic expectations. Centineo’s take? “It’s a film. You want real expectations? Go watch Gaspar Noe’s *Love*, go watch Christian Bale in *Knight of Cups*. It’s the funniest thing to me. ‘It’s unrealistic!!!’ WELL IT’S A ROM-COM!!” The frustration in his voice is real and understandable. In an era dominated by superhero franchises, rom-coms take a secondary spot and cynics reject positivity. “At least we portray this fucking universe. I’m not saying that aliens don’t exist and robotic mechanical beings don’t exist though.” Centineo says in an apologetic way, so as to not dismiss or speak meanly of any of it. It’s true that both of his Netflix projects have an innocence to them that grounds them to reality.

“In *To All The Boys* and *Sierra* you can find truth. Let me give you an example. Look at the Bible. Do I say that everything that happened in the Bible was real? Probably not. And it doesn’t matter. It’s the same thing with the Coran or any religious script. You look at them and never go “That didn’t happen! There’s no way that’s realistic!” When you look at them you’re supposed to pull the message out of them.” Centineo says. “Some people say that it’s unrealistic that two people can be that pure and innocent in high school and it’s because they never experienced it.”

Emotional vulnerability has become a more fictional topic to the social media generation than any superhero franchise. The turmoil of a young person’s psychological openness in the digital era is reflective in Centineo’s characters and in his own personal life as well. The issue is not the lack of innocence and openness, but the lack of people who are innocent and open. He brings a genuine, charming innocence and relaxed receptivity to his characters. However, Centineo’s personal experiences prove that where there is a will, there’s a way. “I remember going about my life and I was quite closed up. Not like Lara Jean in *To All The Boys*, but still closed up. Until I met this girl at a café,” Centineo recalls. “She gave me shit for smoking cigs. I was young, about 18, and I was like ‘Oh, so they’re bad for me, huh? Do you think I don’t know that?’ Long story short is that I started seeing her nightly. Literally night after night. I told her that I was not very happy. She said ‘Let’s change that.’ And she did! We did it for each other. We both weren’t very happy. We both were closed off in certain ways and we completely changed each other’s lives. It’s a very real thing. The question is where do you meet people like that? That’s the issue. That’s the culture. Where do you meet people who are as open as these individuals in my life?”

The validity of Centineo’s personal experience is a reaffirmation of the fact that our society lacks emotional education. However, self-identity is a primordial aspect of a healthy relationship that

steers away from codependency. “That’s why it’s called relating. For one object to relate to another object, you need to have two objects. If you’re not fully your own person yet who loves themselves and takes care of themselves, if you’re not the best object and piece of mass that you could be, you’re never going to be able to relate to the other object as well as you could. You’re never going to have a healthy relationship,” Centineo continues.

On the topic of healthy relationships, the final scene in *Sierra Burgess Is A Loser* shows his character [Jamey] in a strange far-fetched scenario where he forgives Sierra [Shannon Purser] for catfishing him. However, would he be capable of the same openness in his personal life though? “It’s a bit of a stretch. I’ve certainly forgiven people for worse. In Jamie’s perspective, it’s really harsh and fucked up. But here’s a perspective. Have you ever been so in love that you were willing to take a beating for them?”

As an actor that strips himself of his ego he appeals to the young generation because society is currently experiencing a severe lack of real life versions as well as on-screen depictions of Centineo’s type of characters. To add fuel to the fire, the real Centineo is nothing like either Peter or Jamey. He’s an enhanced version of both. “Have you read The Teachings of Abraham?” he asks, “think of your life like radio waves. If you want to receive 102.7 FM Gratitude – you’re not going to put your radio on 99.9 FM Jealousy and try to receive 102.7 FM Gratitude. You’re not going to feel faithful and appreciative if you’re going to feel jealous. You get back what you put out.”

With that wisened mindset, he manages to hold his ground. His Instagram following reached 56% of Harry Styles’ in less than a month. The pace of it was overwhelming for Centineo, but his perspective over social media kept his sanity intact. “I’m crazy overwhelmed. But you also have to think that when Harry Styles goes out in public, he gets a completely different reaction than I do. Instagram fame and celebrity status are two different things. That’s how I keep my sanity,” he affirms. “My sanity is basically – I’ve got these numbers on a 2-dimensional screen and IT DOES NOT carry over into my real life. I’ve got a bit of trouble, but it’s not Harry Styles trouble.”

It’s refreshing to see a young actor self aware of his circumstances, however Centineo seems too humble to acknowledge his own appeal. For someone whose avid Twitter feed serves as a fortune cookie to millions of fans, he is still conscious of his own flaws. “I’m a multidimensional being. Sometimes we feel anxious, sometimes we feel hopeless and sometimes we feel on top of the world and grateful for everything. We’re the entire spectrum and the proof of that is that we’ve got an entire spectrum of emotions to go through. And every emotion plays a beautiful part. At times I’ll feel anxious and at times I’ll feel at peace with it and grateful for the opportunities that have come my way,” Centineo says.

Talent that encapsulates an entire concept of being surfaces very rarely, and to his tens of millions of fans,Centineo is a case of the above. What is most impressive about his presence is the fact that he’s not aware of it. Centineo’s appearance on our screen reinforces the idea that all that matters is what is tangible, teaching a lesson everyone should learn: be present.. So with so much simmering underneath the surface, who is this Noah Centineo? “It’s not for me to decide.”