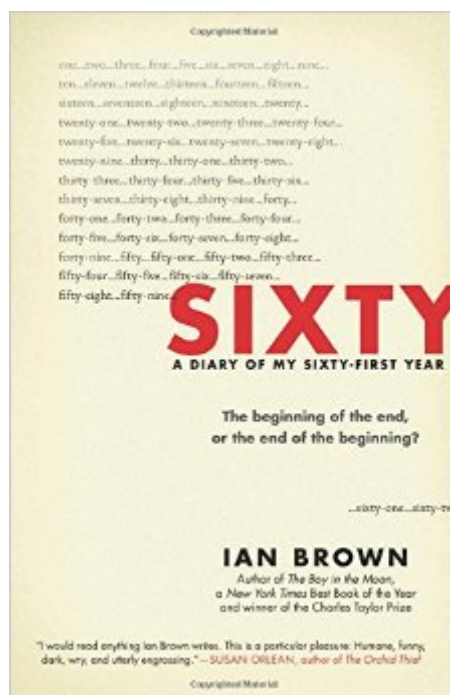


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# Sixty: A Diary Of My Sixty-First Year: The Beginning Of The End, Or The End Of The Beginning?



## Synopsis

This is the thing, you see: I am on my way to being an old man. But at sixty, I am still the youngest of old men. As Ian Brown's sixtieth birthday loomed, every moment seemed to present a choice: Confront, or deny, the biological fact that the end was now closer than the beginning. True, he was beginning to notice memory lapses, creaking knees, and a certain social invisibility—and yet, it troubled him that many people think of sixty as old, because he rarely felt older than at forty. An award-winning writer, Brown instead chose to notice every moment, try to understand it, capture it . . . all without panicking. *Sixty* is the result: Brown's uncensored account of his sixty-first year, and, informed by his reportorial gifts, his investigation of the many changes—physical, mental, and emotional—that come to all of us as we age. Brown is a master of the serio-comic, and his day-to-day dramas—as a husband, father, brother, son, friend, and neighbor—are rendered, inseparably, with wistfulness and laugh-out-loud wit. He is also a discerning, prolific reader, and it is a pure pleasure being privy to his thoughts on the dozens of writers—including Virginia Woolf, Philip Larkin, A. J. Liebling, Wisława Szymborska, Clive James, Sharon Olds, and Karl Ove Knausgaard—who speak to him most, at sixty. From an author on whom the telling detail is never lost, *Sixty* is a richly informative, candid report from the line between middle-aged and soon-to-be-elderly. It perfectly captures the obsessions of a generation realizing that they are no longer young.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It is a real travesty that there are only four reviews of this book, how I wish I had a friend like Ian

Brown, I read his walker book and many of his columns, always enjoyable. Dunno, is it because I am in his age cohort,? His observations and reactions to what life is today are so resonant. Lucky for him he went to boarding school and made those deep bonds. I gleaned a few authors and movies out of his manuscript, for that I am grateful, there is however a cast of ennui that is staying with me, it doesn't feel great but it does feel necessary, how I wish more people could relate to this material

A great read because award-winning writer Ian Brown gave a witty, self-deprecating daily journal of his insecurities when turning 60. The perspective, although entirely male and therefore focused a lot on male insecurities, was funny, sensitive and charming at the same time.

Oh I wanted to like this book! I am exactly Brown's age and am yearning for conversations/dialogue about the issues he addresses. I am distressed by much that distresses him as well: foot pain, fear of falling, regret about so much that has not been accomplished, sadness about the diminishing possibilities ahead, worry that the money will run out, and I could go on...and on...But...while he touches on much that matters he fails to get deep enough to leave a lasting impression. One could say that is the nature of a diary and that he makes no larger claims for this book than that, but I hoped for more. And his continued...well...rather juvenile reactions to younger women, the appearance of his male organ, and sex and sexual attractiveness after sixty can be seen as either gutsy honesty (as noted by the book blurbs and a few reviews) or something he should have worked through a while ago and that drags the book down a level or two. And then there is his marriage...hmmm...this appears to be the elephant in his Toronto living room, something that he hints may not be so very fulfilling but is, I suppose, understandably leaving to the side of the story he tells. The number of his solo excursions in just one year seems to show he is running from something. Is it aging? Or is it that he still wishes for a connection that he lacks? This reader could not help but wonder. All that said, I still enjoyed the book as it roams territory that deserves far more attention.

I bought this book expecting interesting and intelligent reading but I found an immense amount of self pity. I am even not sure if Mr. Brown is honest about all his worries and complaints. After all he is still very fit and healthy with nice family, house and job. I had a strange feeling that maybe he considered all his complaints might look more interesting to his readers and the book might be commercially more successful if he tries to present his being 60 as something very burdensome. In

fact he is trying to be witty and intelligent but unfortunately he is very boring and he repeats himself immensely. However I consider myself lucky to have bought Mr. Brown's book - the reason is that he mentioned reading "My Struggle" by Karl Ove Knausgaard so I started to read "My Struggle" and I was delighted.

I was provided an advance galley copy of this book for review. The writing was entertaining, and it was a creative management of a life experience that some find daunting, depressing, or otherwise not worthwhile. Perhaps a reader in his or her own 60s will see something of themselves here.

I read a review of this in the NY Times and pre-ordered it from Kindle. It was worth the short wait. Brown captures the beauty and the self doubt in aging as well as any writer I have ever encountered. He also has some serious and comical internal monologues that we have all have in our trip through these years. I kept thinking throughout the book about who would appreciate it and realized that all my friends and relatives would if they are male and on the sloping side of fifty. If they read it early they would know what to expect and if they read it late like me they would recognize many parts of themselves. I hope I can read Ian Brown's Seventy when I am in my early eighties. I am planning on it!

This has some moments of insight, but too few. I agree with the other reviewers who object to the self-pity, and I don't take as kind a view of his "male insecurities"--there is some piggishness here. In any case, when I got to his use of the word "twatwipe" to describe some poor barista who didn't jump fast enough to suit him, I'd had enough. I'm younger than Mr. Brown, but not so young that I want to assign any of my remaining time to reading the second half of his book.

Self-pitying and morose diary of a physically fit, active man with a loving wife and daughter living the good life of a journalist who is obsessively afraid of death and infirmity and whose only problems appear to be a hemorrhoid, mild hearing loss and spending beyond his budget. We all have regrets about how we lived our lives; we all fear losing our health and the inevitable oblivion but Mr. Brown should count his blessing, stop worrying and be happy. I am 58 years old so I read this book with a personal interest and keen anticipation. I am relatively healthy and active and do not have the benefit of many of the perks in Mr. Brown's life (unmarried, no children, no lovely house, scant friends, no relatively happy upbringing, etc.), however, to me, 60 is just a number after 59 and before 61. I am involved in living, not second-guessing and Monday morning quarterbacking. I

appreciate what I have and continue to strive for what matters to me in life and make the best of what is left. This book was a downer from a spoiled, frightened, hypochondriacal man. Good luck Mr. Brown as you hurtle toward 70. The only positive thing I take away is being introduced to a far superior writer, Knaussgaard.

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