

# Then and Now

Life was simpler back then.

Cars had a clutch and gearstick – and a choke,  
And a bench seat in the front for those courting.  
‘God Save the Queen’ was played before the pictures,  
And we all stood up.  
Aye, it was simpler back then.

There were blokes and there were sheilas,  
And of course, the perverts.  
But the police would catch them and lock them up,  
Or throw them in the river for a lark.  
Simpler back then.

If Molly Smith married Billy Brown, then she became Mrs Brown,  
And not Molly Brown, but Mrs Billy Brown,  
So you couldn’t get muddled over whose wife was whose.  
And their son would be Wayne Brown,  
No confusion,  
Back then.

Aye, but now!  
I filled in a form at the doctor’s the other day,  
“What’s your favourite pronoun?”  
“Them,” I wrote.  
They were a great band, Van Morrison out front.  
I don’t know why the doctor was interested.  
But that’s how things are,  
Now.

I ticked a checkbox labelled “non-binary,”  
Well, seeing like, as how we went metric when I was a kid.  
But, “Gender” had 58 choices!  
Fifty-eight genders!  
That’s more times than I’ve had sex,  
But you have to do that,  
Now.

What is my sexuality?  
Pansexual, Demisexual, Sapiosexual, Autosexual,  
Well, I made the last one up, but it probably is a choice.  
I just scrawled “I like boys” on the form.  
Perhaps I should have said “men”, but it’s too late,  
Now.

L. G. B. T. I. Q. A. alphabet soup,  
My grandmother didn’t even know what a lesbian was,  
When she read the word in a book –  
And neither did Doris from over the road.  
You might as well put the whole bloody alphabet,  
Now.

Everyone’s an individual, so stuff your checkboxes.  
I wrote, “I am me. Alan. That’s all.”  
“And I like boys.”  
Here’s your form, so sod off,  
Now.

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