

Peter Hitchens

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»» THE BBC has (of course) given great prominence to yet another anti-grammar school 'report' by academics. As usual it is based only on the tiny rump of surviving grammars almost all in well-off areas because spiteful, dogmatic Labour councils closed most of the grammars in poor districts. But the BBC and other Left-wing media never seem to notice the many reports from the Sutton Trust, which show that the better comprehensive schools are savagely biased against children from poor homes.

The Trust found that 91 of the 100 most socially selective schools in England and Wales were officially 'comprehensive'. In theory, they are open to all, but in fact they are most open to the well-off through catchment areas and other more complex factors that also favour the rich and pushy. The only solution the Sutton Trust can come up with is allocating places by lottery, a mad idea. They should look at how well grammars once worked, when we had enough of them. In 1954, the Gurney-Dixon Report found that roughly 65 per cent of pupils at grammar schools in England and Wales came from working-class homes. How many modern 'good' comprehensives can claim anything like the same?