

# Facing Many Directions

## Dissent and resistance in defence of women's rights and secularism, with Pragna Patel

**Please note that due to strike action from 12 rail companies, this event will now be held online via Zoom. Tickets are now free for all.**

**Organisers:** National Secular Society

**Date:** Saturday 1st October 2022, 2-4pm.

**Venue:** Please note that due to strike action from 12 rail companies, this event will now be held online via Zoom. Tickets are now free for all.

**Fee:** [FREE event](#)

**Details:** In 1981, Pragna Patel inherited the empty shell of Southall Black Sisters: a political campaigning group established two years earlier in the heat of anti-racist mobilisations surrounding the death of Blair Peach and the arrests of hundreds of anti-racist activists.

Over the next forty years, Pragna set about breathing life into SBS and transformed it into one of the UK's leading front line and campaigning organisations for black and minority women. Through the provision of front-line services and activism, Pragna has fought for the rights of black and minority women in the face of all forms of gender related violence and related issues of homelessness and poverty, immigration controls and religious fundamentalism.

Her work included defending author Salman Rushdie in the wake of the infamous fatwa issued against his life by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini following the publication of *The Satanic Verses*.

In this lecture, she will reflect on her decades long work, which – out of necessity – has required her to engage in a multi-directional struggle: a simultaneous resistance against all forms of oppression based on race, class and patriarchal and religious community norms strengthened by flawed state policies on multi-culturalism and multi-faithism. She will argue that the rise of identity politics and the denial of women's everyday struggles for freedom, secularism and human rights – rooted in their material realities of deprivation, oppression and powerlessness – spells profound danger, not only for the lives of individual women, but for the survival of feminism and progressive politics itself.

[Read Pragna's response to the recent attack on Salman Rushie.](#)

**Due to confirmed strike action by 12 train companies on October 1st, our guest speaker, staff and many of those who booked a place will be unable to travel to Manchester that day as originally planned. We have therefore decided to hold the event online, via Zoom.**

## Book your tickets

Facing many directions: Dissent and resistance in defence of women's rights and secularism, with Pragna Patel

- [Click here to book](#)

## About the Bradlaugh Lecture

The Bradlaugh Lecture was launched on the day of the 151st anniversary of the NSS's foundation, in recognition of our founder Charles Bradlaugh. The lecture provides a space for a distinguished speaker to explore a secularist topic in depth.

[Read more about the Bradlaugh Lecture](#)

[I'll be at the #BradlaughLecture 2022 with feminist and secularist campaigner Pragna Patel - can't wait!](#)

[Click to tweet](#)