

Bradlaugh Lecture 2022

Facing Many Directions

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

Organisers: National Secular Society

Date: Saturday 1st October 2022, 2-5pm. Includes drinks reception.

Venue: Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley St, Manchester M2 3JL

Fee: [NSS members £5](#) | [Non-members £10](#)

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.

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.

Book your tickets

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- [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.

The lecture will take place at the Manchester Art Gallery, which displays a portrait of Bradlaugh by Walter Sickert. Sickert's piece – donated by the NSS's Manchester branch in 1911 – is an iconic image of Bradlaugh standing at the bar of the House of Commons, [forbidden](#) on account of his atheism from taking up the seat to which he had been elected multiple times.

[Read more about the Bradlaugh Lecture](#)

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

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