

Feminist and secularist Pragna Patel to deliver NSS Bradlaugh Lecture 2022

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Veteran secularist and women's rights campaigner Pragna Patel will be the guest speaker at the National Secular Society's Bradlaugh Lecture this year.

Named one of the top 100 Women Activists and Campaigners in 2011, Patel was a founding member of [Southall Black Sisters](#) (SBS), established to defend the rights of black and minority women.

For over 40 years, Patel and SBS have led campaigns against religious fundamentalism in the UK, including supporting Salman Rushdie during the 'Satanic Verses' affair. In 2010 SBS was awarded the Irwin Prize for Secularist of the Year.

[The Bradlaugh Lecture](#) is an annual event which gives a distinguished speaker an opportunity to explore a topic of interest to secularists in depth.

At the lecture, Patel will reflect on her work, which has required her to engage in a simultaneous resistance against all forms of oppression based on race, class and patriarchal and religious community norms. She will explain how this oppression has been exacerbated by flawed state policies on multi-culturalism and multi-faithism.?

She will also argue the denial of women's everyday struggles for freedom, secularism and human rights spells profound danger, not only for the lives of individual women, but for the survival of feminism and progressive politics itself.

The lecture will be held at Manchester Art Gallery on Saturday 1 October at 2pm. The lecture will be followed by a Q&A and a drinks reception.

NSS comment

NSS chief executive Stephen Evans said: "Pragna Patel is one of the bravest and most influential secularist activists in the UK today. We are therefore delighted she will be delivering our sixth annual Bradlaugh Lecture."

"Her lifelong commitment to standing up for the rights of women and minorities against both religious and far-right extremism is inspiring. All those campaigning for a more secular, equal, free and cohesive society can learn a great deal from hearing her story."

Tickets for the lecture are £10 – and are half price for NSS members.

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