

# **Andy Mager**

## **Selected Audio Transcript**

As someone who's Jewish, I, from a very young age, have been aware of the Holocaust, of the centuries of anti-Semitism which preceded the Holocaust. And now the decades of anti-Semitism which have followed it, including rising anti-Semitism both in this country as well as other parts of the world more recently. And I was taught, and I very much internalized the idea, that the way for any group of people, Jews or anyone else, to combat hatred and oppression is not just to try to protect ourselves, but to recognize that that sort of behavior, which is found throughout human history, needs to be opposed in a comprehensive, universal way. I have a responsibility to speak up for Jews who are being discriminated against or oppressed, but I equally have a responsibility to speak up in support and solidarity with Black people, with women, with LGBTQ people, with anyone who's targeted for discrimination or oppression. So that is the foundation that I bring into these discussions.

Columbus Circle has been an important site for a variety of things since shortly after I came to Syracuse. I have participated in dozens of vigils and demonstrations and protests there, not focused on Columbus, but rather because it was a central community gathering place. So the annual Hiroshima procession ended with a vigil at Columbus Circle for many, many years. I attended a vigil the year after I got here that was honoring the people who were massacred in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in southern Lebanon, at Columbus Circle.

## **Biography**

My name is Andy Mager and I came to Syracuse at the end of 1981 as a young adult, and have lived in the greater Syracuse area most of the time since then. I'm a community organizer, someone who believes deeply in social justice and peace, and about the importance of our relationship to the natural world. I have worked closely with folks from the Onondaga Nation for much of the time that I've lived in the Syracuse area.