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Leaving or Staying: Personal Stories of 20th-Century Czechs and Slovaks

Tue, April 23, 2013

at 6:30PM

At Bohemian National Hall
 321 E 73 Street, 3rd Fl

Two oral historians **Miroslav Vaněk** and **Rosamund Johnston** present their work with Czechs and Slovaks who emigrated to the USA and those who did not.

What motivates people to leave or stay in their homeland? How do their stories add meaning and understanding to historical events?

RSVP:
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Miroslav Vaněk came to oral history with the help of Václav Havel, who was intrigued by Vaněk's interest in oral sources. In 1992, shortly after Havel had left office as president of Czechoslovakia, he sent Vaněk interview transcripts for his book on the Velvet Revolution and later invited him to become researcher at the Institute for Contemporary History (ICH) in Prague. Vaněk is now the director of the Oral History Center at the ICH and teaches oral history at Charles University in Prague. He is currently conducting a survey of Czech society's memories of the normalization period. Vaněk is the author and editor of numerous books, including *Ordinary People...?! An Insight into the Lives of the "Silent Majority,"* (Obyčejní lidé...?! Pohled do života tzv. mlčící většiny) 2009. His research interests include youth culture during the socialist period, communist political elites and dissidents.



Rosamund Johnston has coordinated the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library's oral history project Recording Voices & Documenting Memories of Czech and Slovak Americans. It currently consists of more than 270 interviews with Czech and Slovak immigrants to the United States. Johnston holds a degree in Modern Languages (Czech, Slovak and French) from the University of Oxford, United Kingdom. She has worked as a reporter for Czech Radio's international service, Radio Prague.



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