Personalization in Parliament? Are party leaders more important than they used to be?

Did Canadian voters choose Trudeau in 2015, or did they choose the Liberal Party? Are we really seeing the “presidentialization” of parliamentary elections, as some scholars have suggested? The bulk of the relevant literature lacks clear evidence and takes the increasing importance of leaders for granted. Combining data from the election studies of five countries (the U.S., Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia) from the 1960s to the present, this talk assesses the role of party leaders in the minds of voters over time.