Mi Zhou, “Public space use in New York City, its relationship to space design character, surrounding context, and user’s perception of publicness through space management and control.” submitted May 2012. Advisor: Stacey Sutton.

New York City initiated incentive zoning in 1961 to encourage the private sector to provide public space through bonusing allowable building floor area. Such incentive zoning brought a boom in quantity of public space in New York City, the bonus developers gained is yet to be justified by the resulting space quality, in addition to the provision of light and air at street level. Numerous studies have evaluated public space quality and investigate factors influencing space quality. This thesis investigates the relationship between the design and management of public space, surrounding social context of public space in New York City. This thesis will also tackle the question raised by previous studies, of whether there is a difference between the actual adoption of control methods in public spaces and public perceptions of such methods.