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**Cultural Citizenship and Viewers of the New Zealand Soap *Shortland Street***

*Shortland Street* is New Zealand's most successful long-running television soap opera. The programme has a reputation for dealing with complex issues of public relevance, such as HIV/AIDS, cultural diversity, teenage pregnancy, same-sex relationships and indigenous culture and language. This article analyses how *Shortland Street* viewers talk about these public issues and about the soap's role in representing and reflecting on New Zealand society. Interviews with a total of 112 *Shortland Street* viewers were carried out in 2006, 2007 and 2008. The aim of this article is to analyse interviewees' discourse about *Shortland Street* as practices of cultural citizenship. The benefits of this approach are twofold: first, it will provide a deeper understanding of the value of *Shortland Street* for New Zealand society; and second, it will make connections between theoretical writing on cultural citizenship and empirical audience studies.