

By: [Norman McLaren](#) ([National Film Board of Canada](#) 1952)

URL: http://www.nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins/

Length: 8:05 min.

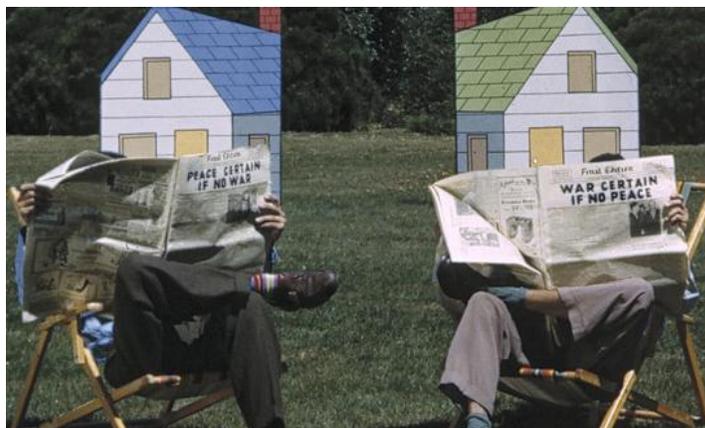
Key words: Conflict, Border conflict

SUMMARY

This Oscar-winning short film begins in seemingly comical fashion with two amicable neighbours claiming possession over a flower that spontaneously appears between their two houses. The good natured squabble eventually evolves into violence. . With its parable style, this story is as relevant today as it was in 1952.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The men argue over a flower. Why?
2. The argument escalates after the erection of a white picket fence, but some say “good fences make good neighbours.” What do you think?
3. As the film progresses, we see a physical transformation of the men. What does this change represent or signify?
4. What conflicts in the world today does this film remind you of?
5. A [2007 scientific study](#) found that violence between ethnic groups usually occurs “in places where boundaries between groups are unclear.” Do you think that the act of putting up border ‘fences’ in such areas would help prevent conflict or enflame existing animosity?



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[Neighbours](#). Rene Cartagena. 2003

[Good Fences make Good Neighbors](#). ScienceDaily. (Sept. 13, 2007)

[South Sudan slides towards destitution amid border conflict with Sudan](#). The Guardian. (May 17, 2012)

[India climbdown may help China border dispute.](#)” BBC.

[Israel-Lebanon sea border dispute looms over gas fields](#). BBC. (July 11, 2011)

[Afghanistan: Border Dispute Takes Toll On Security](#). RFE/Radio Liberty. (Jan. 8, 2007)

[Norman McLaren's films added to UNESCO heritage collection](#). CBC. (July 31, 2009)

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