



Dina Gridgier does the housework while fiance Greg Bloom takes out the garbage. Picture: Stephen Cooper

NEIL KEENE

THE average vacuum cleaner is powerful enough to suck the life right out of a relationship.

Experts say clashes over who does what work around the home are one of the biggest concerns for many couples, but most don't know how to fix the problem.

A survey of more than 1000 Australian women found more than 60 per cent still did most of the housework and almost a third felt they were forced to do those duties.

According to the survey,

commissioned by cleaning products company Enjo, one in five women fight with their partners in an attempt to get them to do more.

And more than 10 per cent of men leave cleaning products lying around the house to make it look like they've done something when they haven't.

Relationships Australia counsellor Lyn Fletcher said the question of who did the vacuuming sounded trivial but it pointed to much larger issues like the balance of power and responsibility in a relationship.

"It's not just housework, it's looking after the kids, home

maintenance, paying the bills. There are a lot of assumptions about who should do these things," she said.

"We stopped thinking that way in the workplace decades ago but for some reason we don't apply the same things at home."

Solicitor Dina Gridgier, from Rose Bay, believes she has done "about 80 per cent" of the housework since moving in with fiance Greg Bloom.

"Greg does the more traditional man roles like taking out the garbage," she said.

"I believe in equality but I guess it's just how my parents did it and I grew up like that."