



## MARY BEARD IS WRONG ABOUT DYEING GREY HAIR - I'M NOT A VICTIM

Written By The Good Housekeeping Web team | 25 February 2016

Following the Cambridge historian's comments on why women cover their greys, 63-year-old Olivia Greenway responds

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



I was shocked when I read comments from Mary Beard today saying women who dye their hair are 'victims of a great grey hair conspiracy.'

Writing for the Mail Online, the 61-year-old Professor of Classics from Cambridge says she is 'stubbornly, proudly and unapologetically grey.' The reasons she gives for not dyeing her hair are that she doesn't want to pretend to be younger than she is and she resents the maintenance time that she thinks dyeing her hair would entail.

She also suggests that it is 'thinner-skinned' women than herself who submit to the pressure to look young.

While I respect Mary's decision to stay grey, I couldn't disagree more.

We are all different and having dyed my hair all my adult life – from when I was a hair model in my twenties and had my locks lovingly tended to by Tony and Guy – to the present day, when my demands are met by my mobile hairdresser of twenty years, I'm not going to be letting the grey hang out anytime soon.



*Olivia has been dyeing her hair for years*

**Do I want to pretend to be younger than I am? Hell yes!**

Why not grey? Well grey would not suit me.

I have fair skin, don't wear much make up and grey would make me look washed out. I've been reddish brown for forty years and feel it's part of me.

Do I want to pretend to be younger than I am? Hell yes!

Why would I want people to know I'm past retirement age if I don't feel I am?

By the way, I'm not one of those desperate women who has just hit the big Five O and can't cope, who has started wearing micro skirts, goes out clubbing and has changed her name to Magnolia – I just want to hold back the ravages of time as long as I can, in a fairly discreet way.

If that means continuing to dye my hair – so be it.

Going to my hairdresser is relatively easy.

To be honest, I used to struggle with hairdressers but when I've found my crock of gold, I stuck with her.

The actual dyeing bit only takes half an hour and I'm done and dusted in 90 minutes. Even if I didn't dye my hair, the trimming and restyling would take an hour. So actually dyeing my hair takes up 30 minutes of my time every six weeks. In light of the amount of time I waste – er sorry, conduct research – on Facebook – it's chicken feed.





*Being a grandmother doesn't mean you have to embrace the grey!*

### **I dye my hair for me**

I don't dye my hair because I feel under pressure – I'm a fairly strong-minded woman and I tend not to follow the crowd. I dye my hair for me. Just as I have occasional facials and spa treatments and go on clothes shopping trips where I usually buy nothing or far too much.

Ageing is a very personal thing; some do it better than others. If you want to embrace your grey, then fine.

But don't assume that those of us who cover our grey are somehow misguided puppets of the hair colouring industry.

*By Olivia Greenway*

