

The economics of undyed hair roots

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As readers here will know, I am a fan of the idea of the 'economics of walking about', which is an idea created by my friend and occasional co-author, Danny Blanchflower.

In that context, this article from the [Huffington Post](#) was drawn to my attention:

The latest [recession indicator](#)? The number of “recession blondes” walking around with their natural roots showing.

President Donald Trump has played coy about the possibility of his tariffs causing a recession, telling NBC News earlier this month that any economic pain would just be part of a [“transition period.”](#) But hairdressers and others in the beauty industry are already seeing hints of a recession, as business tapers off, and clients let their hair grow long and uncolored.

Fashion has always been seen as an indicator of economic sentiment, most especially with regard to skirt hemline length. Short skirts are meant to indicate a strong, confident mood, and an upbeat economy, whilst long skirts are meant to indicate an economic downturn. Anybody who notices these things will have become aware of how long many skirts are at present.

Now, it seems, we have a new indicator based upon women having sufficient money available to afford to have their hair dyed. I am absolutely certain that the article is based upon fact: the trend that it notes appears to be happening.

It has long been known that in downturns, women do not give up on fashion, but adapt to their current circumstances. It was during the 1930s that the consequence was first described as the lipstick economy. When money disappeared for everything else, women bought lipsticks if there was no other item that they could afford to enhance their morale.

I am quite sure that the present display of undyed roots is an economic necessity, but fashion will adapt to embrace it, whilst some other items, which are cheaper than dyed

hair, will still be afforded.

Economics is, if it is anything of worth, a study of human adaptability. That is why I find the version of it that I enjoy partaking in so fascinating.