

On Margaret Hodge

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I was delighted to have contributed [to a Guardian profile of Margaret Hodge](#) published today. This is the relevant bit:

Richard Murphy, a campaigner and accountant at Tax Research, says it is true “Margaret is not an expert and she does muddle things up sometimes,” but her strength has been to ask the questions that any reasonable person might do without being intimidated.

“She sees over and beyond that,” Murphy says. “That is where she has been amazingly effective. Companies and HMRC rely on the detail to say they have stayed within the letter of the law. But Margaret points out that the outcome is not what parliament intended and therefore something must be wrong. She has upset the cosy relationship between HMRC and big business.”

While tax campaigners like Murphy, Occupy and UK Uncut as well as investigative journalists first highlighted the issue of systemic avoidance by corporations, Hodge brought it to political prominence by forcing executives and officials to justify their behaviour in public.

“Yes, she does a bit of grandstanding,” says Murphy, but there is an innate sense of justice and outrage to her questioning that strikes a chord with the public watching.

And people have been watching across the world. There is a story that she was asked for a selfie by a director of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) at a conference in Paris on the grounds that she is now a “tax rockstar”. That’s true, says Murphy: she has literally rocked the world of tax.

Her reputation is well deserved.

And the rest of the article is well worth reading.