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Gharib also thinks that the general public is
becoming savvier about finances. “People are
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IRA is, and they know what a mutual fund is. Back
in 1986, if I went on the street and asked people
whether they knew what a 401k or a mutual fund
was—what is a stock? what is a bond? —they
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Susie Gharib reporting “From the Corner Office” at Fortune.

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These days when we hear so much about
gender roles, particularly in the media, one
wonders how she views that issue based on her
experience. “When I joined Fortune in 1974, it
was male-dominated. There were a lot of research
reporters who were women. We were the ones
who accompanied the male writers and took notes,
typed them up, passed them on, and then they
would write the story. Then things changed. There
were lawsuits against Time Incorporated, against
NBC. Gender equality started to evolve. But
still, in the boardrooms, there were only men. All
the CEOs were men. Today there are twenty-six
women CEOs on the Fortune 500.”

About the specific issue of sexual harassment
Gharib says, “I interviewed Gretchen Carlson, the
journalist at Fox who brought the lawsuit against
Roger Ailes that led to his ousting. The day I
interviewed her was the day that Harvey
Weinstein had been called out in The New York Times about
everything he had done. So, I said to her, ‘What do
you think of this newest development?’ And she
said that when she came out and filed that lawsuit,
she got emails and letters from people all over the
world saying ‘Thank you for doing this.’ It gave
them a little more courage.”

But how can we change this culture of male
power over women? Gharib has an idea. “It starts
from mothers and fathers and how they educate
their boys and girls on this kind of issue. Let’s face
it, every company I’ve worked at, they’ve always
had the lawyers come in and educate us about what
sexual harassment is—everything from an off-
color joke to touching someone in the office. It’s a
wide range. But those legal training classes come
kind of late, and there’s still a lot of work to do.”

One also wonders how social media has
influenced the landscape of journalism. “I hope,”
says Gharib, “that we get smart young people who
want to go into journalism. I think our American
democracy depends on it. There are a lot of what
we now call ‘citizen journalists.’ It’s just anybody
who has a blog or writes something on social
media, tweets, or puts it on Facebook. I hate to
single out Facebook, but this happens everywhere.
They have a superficial headline, and that’s what a
lot of people are going to live with—that headline.
Facebook is not a news organization.”

On the question of whether closing newspapers
and cutting budgets for newscasts will affect
the job market for journalists and decrease the
quality of journalism, Gharib agrees that there
is reason to worry. “Everybody is getting news
from their cellphones and their computers, maybe
some of them are subscribing to newspapers, but
that’s not enough. I wish more people would buy
more newspapers. We need them, and we need
that coverage. It does disturb me that so many
smaller towns or townships are cutting back so
much. They’re not getting the advertising, and the
advertising dollars are going to other platforms.
Does it concern me? Very much so.”

Gharib Addresses Sexism and the Decline of the Media

Dr. Aldemaro Romero Jr.
College Talk

“I think it’s the best job on the planet. You’re
learning something new every day, you’re meeting
fascinating people, and you’re telling stories of
triumph and stories of tragedy. You get to interview
people and ask them pretty much anything you
want.” That’s how Susie Gharib explains why she
chose journalism as a career.

After receiving a master’s degree
from Columbia University, this award-winning
journalist went on to become a long-time TV
anchor at CNBC’s Nightly Business Report and
at PBS, besides working for Fortune magazine.
This year she became the Ratner Visiting Professor
in the Department of Journalism and the Writing
Professions of the Weissman School of Arts and
Sciences at Baruch College/CUNY.

When asked why she got into broadcasting,
Gharib says it was purely accidental. “I wanted to
be a magazine writer, and it was very fortunate that
I got a job at Fortune magazine, which launched
me as a financial news reporter. A number of
entrepreneurial people in the television world
decided that we had to start having financial shows
and financial reporters. They came after me. I told
them, ‘Look, I know nothing about television,’ and
they said, ‘We’ll teach you, you know business,
and we’re going to teach you.’”

That doesn’t mean Gharib has no criticisms
of the way the media is conducted today. “One
problem we have these days is that some broadcast,
print, and electronic media are so slanted one
way or the other. It’s a shame because the kind of
journalism that I grew up with, the kind that you
teach here at Baruch College, is to be objective, to
remember that you as the reporter are not the story.
You don’t want entertainment. You want to know
what’s going on. The media landscape has gotten
so split that, depending on the network you’re
tuning into, you’ll get one side of the story but not
the whole story,” says she.

Still, that begs the question of how financial
journalism differs from other types of journalism.
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It’s fine when everything is going well. But I’ve

Dr. Aldemaro Romero Jr. is the Dean of the Weissman School
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