



IS ELITE DAMASCUS IN DENIAL? PAGE 32

'General Clark is the first reality-TV host to hold a Medal of Honor and six honorary knighthoods.'

MICHELLE COTTLE PAGE 6



CRAZY FOR NORA PAGE 42



IN MY FATHER'S STUDIO PAGE 52

2 LETTERS & CONTRIBUTORS

4 PERISCOPE

Digital gadgets are changing our brains.
By Tina Brown

NEWSBEAST

5 NATIONAL NOTEBOOK

The godless particle: science posits a new story of creation. By Lawrence M. Krauss

6 PERSON OF INTEREST

Gen. Wesley Clark's celebrity smackdown.
By Michelle Cottle

7 INTERNATIONAL

Russian roulette, fuming Frenchmen.
By Tunku Varadarajan

8 MEDIA

Don't like gymnastics? NBC's betting you'll watch the Olympics anyway. By Howard Kurtz

11 HEALTH

By Kent Sepkowitz

BUSINESS By Rob Cox

TECH By Maya Baratz

14 COURTS

How John Roberts and Barack Obama ended up allies on health care. By Laurence Tribe

16 NEWS GALLERY

Long haute summer.

18 POLITICS

Let's ban thinking! By Paul Begala

19 COMPASS

London's loss is Asia's gain. By Niall Ferguson

21 REPORTER AT LARGE

Father Tom? Long before Scientology, Cruise studied for the priesthood. By Michael Daly

FEATURES

24 Tweets. Texts. Email. Posts.

Is the Onslaught Making Us Crazy?
The new research into the Net's negative effects. By Tony Dokoupil

32 Champagne Flows While Syria Burns

A country at war with itself. Bombs and civilian massacres. Yet, in Damascus, the music plays on. By Janine di Giovanni

38 Hey Buddy, Can You Spare

\$20 Million?
The super PACs are killing him. Inside Obama's cash crunch. By Daniel Klaidman

42 I'll Have What She Had

It was a life lived to the hilt. Nora Ephron: writer, filmmaker, maven, wit. She was one of a kind. By James Atlas

OMNIVORE

50 FILM Whitney Houston's bittersweet bow.

52 ART The legacy of De Niro's father.

54 BOOKS Brainy beach reads.

55 WANT Chris Bosh travels like a champion.

56 MY FAVORITE MISTAKE

Harry Shearer on marriage as a punchline.

ON THE COVER

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SAM STUCHBURY, SAM CLARK, AND JOE STOCKMAN FOR NEWSWEEK