



Across my desk

Vivien Horler



A selection of the books that landed on our Book Editor's desk this week. Some will be reviewed later

Esther's House, by Carol Campbell (Umuzi)

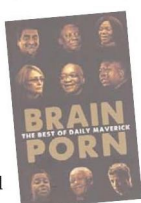
The snapping sound alerts Katjie to the fact the electricity is shorting. But by the time she has reached the main house and got Oom Krisjan to turn off the mains, the shack is on fire and Shireen, who came in late and drunk, can't be roused. Reeling from the tragedy, Katjie and her friend, Esther Gelderblom, decide they're

sick of being on an endless housing list, a list manipulated by corrupt housing officials. So they take matters into their own hands and discover what happens when good people are pushed too far. Campbell's first book was the acclaimed *My Children Have Faces*, about the Karoo's karretjiemense.



Brain Porn – the best of the Daily Maverick (Tafelberg)

Over the past five years the Daily Maverick has become a must-read for those interested in the society around them. They tackle subjects with boldness and aplomb and insights that have passed others by. In his introduction to this collection, Max du Preez says: "I don't need to agree with everything I read, but I do insist on intellectual integrity and good writing. I demand that reporters have a memory that extends further than the previous decade."



Flat/White, by Ted Botha (Mercury)

The story of expatriate Ted Botha, author of *Apartheid in my Rucksack*, who went to New York for a look-see, got a job on Time Out New York, and couldn't believe his luck when he moved into an



astonishingly cheap flat in Harlem. There was a catch. Well, several: drug dealing, police raids and death threats. Oh, and racism. He would catch a bus home in the small hours with the Hispanic cleaning women, chatting to a neighbour about a mutual acquaintance who dealt in cocaine. Sometimes he longed for Africa, where he figured he understood the problems. Then it got worse.