'**Poor Little Fool' songwriter Sheeley dead at 62**
By Dean Goodman May 19, 2002

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Songwriter Sharon Sheeley, who penned pop icon Ricky Nelson's first No. 1 hit, 1958's "Poor Little Fool," died in a Los Angeles hospital of complications following an aneurysm, a statement released Saturday said. She was 62.

Sheeley also wrote for other late rock 'n' roll notables such as Eddie Cochran and Ritchie Valens. She was riding with Cochran when he was killed in a car crash in 1960.

The statement said Sheeley died Friday evening at Sherman Oaks hospital following an aneurysm on May 12.

Her other credits, in collaboration with singer-songwriter Jackie DeShannon, included "(He's) The Great Imposter" for the Fleetwoods and "Dum Dum" for Brenda Lee, both in 1961, and "Break-A-Way," first recorded by Irma Thomas in 1964.

Sheeley got her first break with "Poor Little Fool," an autobiographical lament inspired by her relationship with a married man -- rock pioneer Don Everly of the Everly Brothers. Since her family lived near Nelson in the tony Los Angeles suburb of Laguna Beach, Sheeley stalled her car outside his house, let him invite her inside and mendaciously mentioned that rival rocker Elvis Presley was planning to record "Poor Little Fool." That sparked his interest, albeit reluctantly.

"I really didn't care for the song to begin with," Nelson was quoted as saying in notes accompanying the 2000 boxed set "Legacy." "It was a different kind of song -- real uptown."

He buried it on his second, eponymous album, but pressure from radio DJ's forced him to release it as a single, and it reached the top of the U.S. pop charts. (Nelson died in a 1985 plane crash.)

Sheeley also wrote "Love Again," the "B" side of Eddie Cochran's 1958 Top 10 anti-establishment hit "Summertime Blues." The two began dating, and she co-wrote with Cochran's brother, Bob, the 1959 Eddie Cochran hit, "Somethin' Else." The singer also recorded Sheeley's solo composition, "Cherished Memories," and "Hurry Up," was recorded by Ritchie Valens.

In 1961, Sheeley met DeShannon, best known for her interpretation of Burt Bacharach's "What The World Needs Now Is Love" and her own "Put a Little Love In Your Heart." The next year, she married the man who had introduced them, Los Angeles disc jockey Jimmy O'Neill. They divorced five years later, but remained friends.

In her later years, Sheeley reaped royalties from late Sex Pistols member Sid Vicious' punk version of "Somethin' Else." The composition was also covered by hard rock band Led Zeppelin on their archival "BBC Sessions" album from 1997.

She is survived by her son, Shannon Burg. No public services are planned, the statement said.