

THE EARLY X-RAY EMISSION FROM GRBs

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ABSTRACT

We present observations of the early X-ray emission for a sample of 40 gamma-ray bursts (GRBs) obtained using the *Swift* satellite, for which the narrow-field instruments were pointed at the burst within 10 minutes of the trigger. Using data from the Burst Alert Telescope and the X-Ray Telescope, we show that the X-ray light curve can be well described by an exponential that relaxes into a power law, often with flares superimposed. The transition time between the exponential and the power law provides a physically defined timescale for the burst duration. In most bursts, the power law breaks to a shallower decay within the first hour, and a late emission “hump” is observed, which can last for many hours. In other GRBs the hump is weak or absent. The observed variety in the shape of the early X-ray light curve can be explained as a combination of three components: prompt emission from the central engine, afterglow, and the late hump. In this scenario, afterglow emission begins during or soon after the burst, and the observed shape of the X-ray light curve depends on the relative strengths of the emission due to the central engine and that of the afterglow. There is a strong correlation such that those GRBs with stronger afterglow components have brighter early optical emission. The late emission hump can have a total fluence equivalent to that of the prompt phase. GRBs with the strongest late humps have weak or no X-ray flares.

Subject headings: accretion, accretion disks — black hole physics — gamma rays: bursts

Online material: color figures

1. INTRODUCTION

GRBs are identified as brief flashes of gamma rays seen at a random location on the sky. For that instant the GRB becomes the intrinsically brightest single object in the universe. The duration of a GRB in terms of its prompt emission (i.e., the burst) is usually defined in terms of the timescale over which 90% of the gamma rays were detected: the T_{90} parameter. It is conventional to describe those GRBs for which $T_{90} > 2$ s as long/soft bursts, and those with shorter duration as short/hard bursts (e.g., Kouveliotou et al. 1993).

It is now generally accepted that long-duration GRBs result from the death of a rapidly rotating massive star (Paczynski 1998; MacFadyen & Woosley 1999). The stellar core collapses inward to form a black hole surrounded by an accreting disk or

torus. The accreting material liberates gravitational potential energy either in the form of neutrinos or via magnetohydrodynamic processes. These generate a relativistic jet, oriented along the rotation axis of the stellar core, which eventually escapes the star. The jet contains a relatively modest amount of baryonic material moving at a high Lorentz factor.

Prior to the *Swift* era, almost all of our knowledge about the emission from GRBs beyond a few seconds came from the study of long bursts. Short bursts were, quite literally, too short to be localized by observatories prior to *Swift*. The *Swift* satellite (Gehrels et al. 2004) has changed that situation. The data for the first short bursts detected by *Swift* (Gehrels et al. 2005; Barthelmy et al. 2005b; Hjorth et al. 2005; Bloom et al. 2006) strongly support the idea that the gamma-ray emission seen from short GRBs arises from a jet powered by a merger of two compact objects, most likely two neutron stars or a neutron star and a black hole. The *Swift* data also show that the X-ray emission from some short bursts can be detected long after T_{90} , allowing for a direct comparison of the early X-ray emission between short and long GRBs. Some short bursts may have collimated flow (e.g., GRB 051221A; Burrows et al. 2006), although this is less clear in others (e.g., GRB 050724; Barthelmy et al. 2005b).

For both types of GRB, it is thought that the jet flow is inhomogeneous, leading to internal shocks caused by a variable Lorentz factor (Rees & Mészáros 1994; Sari & Piran 1997). These produce the variable gamma-ray emission seen, when viewing within the jet beam, as a GRB. The gamma-ray emission typically lasts a few tens of s before fading below detectability with the current generation of gamma-ray instruments, including the *Swift* Burst Alert Telescope (BAT; Barthelmy et al. 2005a). The sensitivity of BAT is a complicated function of burst duration and spectral shape (see Band 2006). In practice the BAT detects bursts with 15–150 keV fluences as low as $\sim 10^{-8}$ ergs cm^{-2} .

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The *Swift* satellite, however, has the capability to rapidly slew and point its X-Ray Telescope (XRT; Burrows et al. 2005b) and Ultraviolet Optical Telescope (UVOT; Roming et al. 2005) at the burst location. The XRT can detect a source at fainter flux levels in the (observed) 0.3–10 keV band than are possible using extrapolated BAT data. For a Crab-like spectrum and a Galactic column of $1 \times 10^{20} \text{ cm}^{-2}$, the XRT detects ~ 1 count per 100 s for a source with a 0.3–10 keV flux of $10^{-12} \text{ ergs cm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$. Thus, *Swift* can routinely follow the evolution of the earliest X-ray emission from GRBs with only modest gaps in the observed light curve.

The GRB flux can be represented as a function of time and frequency using a function $f_\nu \propto \nu^{-\beta} t^{-\alpha}$, where β is the spectral index and α is the temporal index.¹³ Analysis of some of the first bursts observed with *Swift* shows that the early X-ray light curves are complex. In some cases (e.g., Tagliaferri et al. 2005; Hill et al. 2006; Cusumano et al. 2006; Vaughan et al. 2006a) the early X-ray emission (observed with the XRT within a few hundred s of the burst) can decline rapidly in the first few minutes, with $\alpha \sim 3$ or greater. The light curve can then show a break to a shallower decay component, which we henceforth refer to as the late emission “hump.” Analysis of GRB samples from the early phase of the *Swift* mission (Nousek et al. 2006) confirms that this pattern of a rapidly decaying light curve followed by a late emission hump is common. However, in some bursts the earliest observed X-ray flux appears to decline relatively slowly ($\alpha \sim 1$; e.g., Campana et al. 2005; Blustin et al. 2006).

The fading X-ray emission could be due to a number of components, including high-latitude emission from the fading burst (Kumar & Panaitescu 2000), the interaction of the jet with the surroundings, the afterglow emission produced by an external shock (e.g., Mészáros & Rees 1997), and thermal emission from a photosphere around the outflow (e.g., Mészáros & Rees 2000) or from a hot cocoon associated with the jet (e.g., Mészáros & Rees 2001). A significant fraction of GRBs also show X-ray flares (e.g., Burrows et al. 2005a) superimposed on the declining light curves.

If the BAT and the XRT are initially detecting the prompt emission from the jet, the most rapidly decaying X-ray light curves could be due to viewing photons at high latitudes (i.e., large angles to the line of sight) as the prompt emission fades (Kumar & Panaitescu 2000; Tagliaferri et al. 2005; Nousek et al. 2006; Zhang et al. 2006; Panaitescu et al. 2006). In at least one case (GRB 050219A; Tagliaferri et al. 2005), the BAT and XRT light curves do not appear to join, and in other cases the observed X-ray rapid decay rate is higher than expected from the high-latitude model (e.g., Vaughan et al. 2006a). Alternatives such as structured jets (e.g., Zhang & Mészáros 2002b), multiple jets, or patchy jets (e.g., Burrows et al. 2005c) in which we see varying emission as our light cone expands are also possibilities. These models have difficulties, however, explaining those bursts that decline relatively slowly and for which other emission components, such as the afterglow, may contribute at the earliest times. Both the rapid-decay and afterglow models have difficulties explaining the late emission hump. This component may be due to forward shock emission, which is refreshed with energy either due to continued emission from the central engine or because the ejecta have a range in initial Lorentz factor (Rees & Mészáros 1998; Sari & Mészáros 2000; Zhang & Mészáros 2002a; Nousek et al. 2006; Zhang et al. 2006; Granot & Kumar 2006).

To disentangle the relative contribution of emission from the central engine and that due to afterglow, and hence understand

the origin of the early gamma-ray and X-ray emission, requires a systematic analysis of the temporal and spectral properties of a large GRB sample combining data from the BAT and XRT. The previous studies of GRB samples from *Swift* (e.g., Nousek et al. 2006) include a relatively small number of GRBs with early (few minutes from trigger) XRT observations and do not include a combined temporal and spectral analysis of data from the BAT and XRT. The aim of this paper is to determine the shape of the early X-ray light curve and spectrum for a large sample of GRBs for which observations were obtained early with the *Swift* narrow-field telescopes. We use the combined BAT and XRT data to determine whether an extrapolation of the early gamma-ray emission detected by the BAT joins smoothly to that seen by the XRT, whether or not there is always a rapid decline phase seen by either instrument, and to investigate the relative importance of emission from the central engine and the afterglow.

Our GRB sample is summarized in § 2. The analyses of the BAT and XRT data are presented in §§ 3 and 4, and we explain how the data from the two instruments were combined in § 5. The observed temporal and spectral shapes are presented in § 6. In § 7 we describe a light-curve-fitting technique, which we use to study the various components contributing to the early X-ray emission. The discussion and conclusions are given in §§ 8 and 9, respectively.

2. GRB SAMPLE

Our initial GRB list of potential bursts comprised those detected by *Swift* prior to 2005 October 1, for which *Swift* slewed to point its narrow-field instruments within 10 minutes of the burst trigger time. In the majority of cases the XRT observations started within 2 minutes. Of the 45 such GRBs, we excluded 5 from our detailed analysis: GRB 050117A ($T_{90} = 167$ s; Hill et al. 2006), GRB 050509B ($T_{90} = 0.04$ s; Gehrels et al. 2005), GRB 050815 ($T_{90} = 2.6$ s), GRB 050906 ($T_{90} = 0.02$ s), and GRB 050925 ($T_{90} = 0.01$ s). Four of these are short and faint, and as a result, insufficient X-ray photons with which to accurately constrain the early X-ray spectral and temporal indices were obtained in the first hour. Only one of the excluded GRBs is a long burst (GRB 050117A). In this case the XRT obtained few data due to it being observed initially while *Swift* was in the South Atlantic Anomaly. Allowing for these problems, these bursts are consistent with the sample studied here.

The 40 remaining GRBs form our sample and are listed in Table 1. Following convention, the bursts are named as GRB-year-month-day and with a letter (A, B, C, etc.) if multiple bursts were detected on that day. We adopt the usual T_{90} convention for long and short bursts, but note that the assignment does depend on the detector sensitivity and bandpass. We use the 15–150 keV band. We include two bursts—GRB 050724 and GRB 050813—that we classify as short bursts to see how they compare. GRB 050724 formally has a $T_{90} > 2$ s in the BAT, but this is due to a long, fairly soft X-ray tail of emission (Barthelmy et al. 2005b). It would have appeared to be a short burst with $T_{90} \sim 0.4$ s with the *Compton Gamma Ray Observatory* Burst and Transient Source Experiment (CGRO BATSE) instrument (Fishman et al. 1994).

3. BAT ANALYSIS

All of the GRBs discussed in this paper were detected by the *Swift* BAT. Once triggered, the BAT determines if there is a new point source, and the *Swift* figure-of-merit processor then computes whether this source can be observed immediately (i.e., is unconstrained by the Earth, Moon, or Sun). If so, the satellite is

¹³ The photon index Γ is related to β by $\Gamma = \beta + 1$.

TABLE 1
GRB SAMPLE AND BAT DATA

GRB	T_{90} (s)	T_{50} (s)	β_b	BAT Mean Flux (15–150 keV) (10^{-8} ergs cm^{-2} s^{-1})	Redshift	References
050126.....	25.7 ± 0.3	13.7 ± 0.3	0.41 ± 0.15	3.15 ± 0.28	1.29	1
050128.....	28.0 ± 0.2	8.0 ± 0.2	0.41 ± 0.08	17.1 ± 0.71	...	
050219A.....	23.5 ± 0.3	9.9 ± 0.2	0.35 ± 0.05	16.7 ± 0.51	...	
050315.....	96.0 ± 0.5	24.7 ± 0.4	1.15 ± 0.09	3.23 ± 0.14	1.949	2
050319.....	149.6 ± 0.7	58 ± 0.5	1.10 ± 0.20	0.54 ± 0.05	3.24	3
050401.....	33.3 ± 2.0	25.8 ± 1.0	0.52 ± 0.07	22.3 ± 0.88	2.90	4
050406.....	5.7 ± 0.2	2.4 ± 0.3	1.64 ± 0.47	1.35 ± 0.31	...	
050412.....	24.1 ± 2.0	8.4 ± 1.0	−0.26 ± 0.18	2.22 ± 0.22	...	
050416A.....	2.4 ± 0.3	0.7 ± 0.2	2.20 ± 0.25	13.76 ± 1.31	0.6535	5
050421.....	10.3 ± 0.2	5.1 ± 0.2	0.64 ± 0.46	1.04 ± 0.29	...	
050422.....	59.2 ± 0.3	42.8 ± 0.3	0.54 ± 0.21	0.97 ± 0.12	...	
050502B.....	17.5 ± 0.2	9.8 ± 0.2	0.64 ± 0.15	2.57 ± 0.23	...	
050525A.....	8.8 ± 0.5	5.2 ± 0.4	0.83 ± 0.02	175.9 ± 2.32	0.606	6
050607.....	26.5 ± 0.2	13.7 ± 0.2	0.97 ± 0.17	2.15 ± 0.20	...	
050712.....	48.4 ± 2.0	25.6 ± 1.0	0.50 ± 0.19	1.96 ± 0.22	...	
050713A.....	128.8 ± 10	11.4 ± 10	0.55 ± 0.07	3.81 ± 0.14	...	
050713B.....	131.0 ± 3.0	44.0 ± 0.7	0.53 ± 0.15	3.21 ± 0.27	...	
050714B.....	46.4 ± 0.4	21.4 ± 0.3	1.70 ± 0.41	1.13 ± 0.21	...	
050716.....	69.4 ± 1.0	36.0 ± 0.5	0.47 ± 0.06	8.76 ± 0.30	...	
050717.....	67.2 ± 2.0	24.8 ± 1.0	0.36 ± 0.05	8.63 ± 0.20	...	
050721.....	39.2 ± 0.5	15.0 ± 0.5	0.78 ± 0.12	7.11 ± 0.48	...	
050724 ^a	152.5 ± 9.0	84.6 ± 3.0	1.17 ± 0.26	0.74 ± 0.09	0.257	7
050726.....	33.9 ± 0.2	15.0 ± 0.5	0.01 ± 0.17	4.84 ± 0.43	...	
050730.....	155.0 ± 2.1	63.0 ± 1.6	0.52 ± 0.11	1.48 ± 0.09	3.97	8
050801.....	20.0 ± 3.0	6.0 ± 1.0	1.03 ± 0.24	1.52 ± 0.22	...	
050802.....	30.9 ± 1.0	9.3 ± 0.5	0.66 ± 0.15	6.08 ± 0.52	1.71	
050803.....	89.0 ± 10	40.0 ± 5.0	0.47 ± 0.11	2.38 ± 0.15	(0.422) ^b	10
050813 ^a	0.58 ± 0.1	0.26 ± 0.1	0.37 ± 0.37	8.52 ± 0.20	...	
050814.....	144.0 ± 3.0	56.0 ± 1.2	0.98 ± 0.19	1.22 ± 0.13	...	
050819.....	35.8 ± 4.0	16.4 ± 1.0	1.56 ± 0.21	0.91 ± 0.14	...	
050820A.....	240 ± 5.0	221 ± 5.0	0.24 ± 0.07	1.57 ± 0.11	2.612	11
050822.....	105 ± 2.0	43.8 ± 1.0	1.53 ± 0.09	2.54 ± 0.16	...	
050826.....	35.3 ± 8.0	14.8 ± 2.0	0.10 ± 0.28	1.18 ± 0.19	...	
050904.....	173.2 ± 10	53.3 ± 5.0	0.38 ± 0.04	2.74 ± 0.10	6.29	12
050908.....	20.3 ± 2.0	6.7 ± 1.0	0.91 ± 0.11	2.41 ± 0.26	3.35	13
050915A.....	41.8 ± 3.0	14.2 ± 1.0	0.37 ± 0.11	1.79 ± 0.18	...	
050915B.....	39.5 ± 1.0	21.3 ± 0.6	0.89 ± 0.06	8.61 ± 0.34	...	
050916.....	92.1 ± 10	32.0 ± 4.0	0.83 ± 0.32	1.19 ± 0.16	...	
050922B.....	150 ± 15	25.0 ± 5.0	1.11 ± 0.16	1.25 ± 0.18	...	
050922C.....	4.1 ± 1.0	1.4 ± 0.5	0.34 ± 0.03	35.7 ± 1.05	2.198	14

^a Would have appeared as a short burst to BATSE.

^b Uncertain identification. Redshift given is that of a star-forming galaxy in the XRT error box.

REFERENCES.— (1) Berger et al. 2005; (2) Kelson & Berger 2005; (3) Fynbo et al. 2005a; (4) Fynbo et al. 2005b; (5) Cenko et al. 2005; (6) Foley et al. 2005; (7) Prochaska et al. 2005a; (8) Chen et al. 2005; (9) Fynbo et al. 2005c; (10) Bloom et al. 2005; (11) Prochaska et al. 2005b; (12) Kawai et al. 2005; (13) Fugazza et al. 2005; (14) Jakobsson et al. 2005.

commanded to slew to put the target in the field of view of the narrow-field instruments. The BAT continues to observe during the slew, providing an uninterrupted light curve.

The BAT data for the GRB sample were processed using the standard BAT analysis software (*Swift* software version 2.0) as described in the BAT Ground Analysis Software Manual, and then light curves and spectra were extracted over 15–150 keV, correcting the response matrix during slews.¹⁴ The derived values of T_{90} and T_{50} are given in Table 1, along with the mean fluxes and spectral indices derived from fitting single power laws [$N_{\text{ph}}(E) \propto E^{-\Gamma_b}$] over the period corresponding to T_{90} . Thus, the spectral properties are averages over T_{90} . Throughout this paper, all quoted errors on fit parameters correspond to 90% confidence

for a single parameter (i.e., $\Delta\chi^2 = 2.706$). XSPEC version 11.3 (Arnaud 1996) was used to fit the BAT and XRT spectra.

A single power law provides a statistically acceptable fit to the BAT data in most cases. The four GRBs for which a cutoff power-law model [$N(E) \propto E^{-\Gamma_{\text{bc}}} \exp(-E/E_{\text{cut}})$] provides a significantly better fit (at >99% confidence) with a well-determined E_{cut} are noted in Table 2, which gives the low-energy spectral indices ($\beta_{\text{bc}} = \Gamma_{\text{bc}} - 1$) and the e -folding energies of the exponential cutoff (E_{cut}). The T_{90} and β_b distributions are not significantly different from those found for previous GRB samples.

4. XRT ANALYSIS

The XRT observations used here began at the times given in column (2) of Table 3. These times are relative to the GRB trigger time determined by the BAT. The XRT observations incorporate

¹⁴ See <http://heasarc.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/swift/analysis>.

TABLE 2
BAT FITS FOR THOSE BURSTS BETTER FITTED WITH A CUTOFF POWER LAW

GRB	BAT β_{bc}	E_{cut} (keV)	$\Delta\chi^2$ ^a
050128.....	$-0.53^{+0.35}_{-0.37}$	$65.4^{+39.6}_{-18.6}$	23.8
050219A.....	$-1.03^{+0.28}_{-0.30}$	$43.2^{+10.8}_{-7.60}$	88.3
050525A.....	$-0.17^{+0.12}_{-0.12}$	$63.8^{+8.30}_{-6.70}$	246.6
050716.....	$-0.17^{+0.27}_{-0.29}$	$89.1^{+61.6}_{-27.4}$	18.0

^a Improvement in χ^2 for 1 dof.

data taken using the various operating modes of the instrument (see Hill et al. 2004) and were corrected for pile-up where appropriate, using the method described in Nousek et al. (2006). The bulk of the XRT data presented here were obtained using Windowed Timing (WT) or Photon Counting (PC) modes

(event grades 0–2 and 0–12, respectively). The XRT data were processed using XRPIPELINE version 0.8.8 into filtered event lists, which were then used to extract spectra and light curves for the 0.3–10 keV energy range.

The X-ray light curves are generally complex, often with “flares” and frequent changes in temporal slope, which can occur over short time intervals, particularly at early times. As an initial simple parameterization, we have fitted the XRT light curves obtained over the first few orbits with a broken power-law model with flux $\propto (t - t_0)^{-\alpha_1}$ before some break time, t_{break} , and $\propto (t - t_0)^{-\alpha_2}$ after the break. This function quantifies the early decay rate and any late emission hump. The temporal decay slopes and the break times are given in Table 3 and were determined using the BAT trigger time as t_0 . This time corresponds to the start of the first foreground interval for which the BAT was able to locate a point source. This may not coincide with the initial rise in count rate.

TABLE 3
XRT SPECTRAL AND TEMPORAL FITS

GRB	XRT Start (s)	XRT β_x	Galactic N_H (10^{20} cm^{-2})	Intrinsic N_H (10^{20} cm^{-2})	α_1	t_{break} (s)	α_2
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
050126.....	127	1.59 ± 0.38	5.30	...	$2.52^{+0.50}_{-0.22}$	424^{+561}_{-120}	$1.00^{+0.17}_{-0.26}$
050128.....	227	0.85 ± 0.12	4.80	$7.67^{+2.06}_{-1.85}$	$0.66^{+0.10}_{-0.11}$	1724^{+937}_{-565}	$1.16^{+0.09}_{-0.08}$
050219A.....	92	1.02 ± 0.20	8.50	$17.0^{+7.00}_{-6.40}$	$3.17^{+0.24}_{-0.16}$	332^{+26}_{-22}	$0.75^{+0.09}_{-0.07}$
050315.....	83	1.50 ± 0.40	4.30	$122^{+46.0a}_{-38.0}$	$5.30^{+0.50}_{-0.40}$	400^{+20}_{-20}	$0.71^{+0.04}_{-0.04}$
050319.....	211	2.02 ± 0.47	1.10	...	$3.80^{+0.56}_{-0.56}$	424^{+38}_{-35}	$0.47^{+0.10}_{-0.10}$
050401.....	128	0.98 ± 0.05	4.80	$170^{+37.0a}_{-34.0}$	$0.76^{+0.02}_{-0.02}$	5518^{+1149}_{-1043}	$1.31^{+0.05}_{-0.05}$
050406.....	84	1.37 ± 0.25	3.00	...	$1.05^{+0.57}_{-0.51}$	...	...
050412.....	99	0.26 ± 0.32	2.20	...	$1.81^{+0.57}_{-0.47}$	...	...
050416A.....	87	0.80 ± 0.29	2.10	$46.8^{+31.7a}_{-25.2}$	$0.87^{+0.45}_{-0.45}$	400^{+221}_{-264}	$0.24^{+0.44}_{-0.24}$
050421.....	110	0.27 ± 0.37	14.4	$61.0^{+42.0}_{-35.0}$	$3.05^{+0.17}_{-0.15}$	...	...
050422.....	109	2.33 ± 0.60	100	...	$5.31^{+0.66}_{-0.60}$	341^{+154}_{-72}	$0.59^{+0.20}_{-0.27}$
050502B.....	63	0.81 ± 0.28	3.70	...	$1.35^{+0.31}_{-0.27}$	...	...
050525A.....	125	1.07 ± 0.02	9.00	$38.0^{+3.40a}_{-3.00}$	$0.98^{+0.05}_{-0.05}$	641^{+690}_{-123}	$1.39^{+0.09}_{-0.04}$
050607.....	84	0.77 ± 0.48	14.0	...	$1.94^{+0.17}_{-0.17}$	1217^{+372}_{-276}	$0.54^{+0.05}_{-0.05}$
050712.....	166	0.90 ± 0.06	13.0	...	$1.34^{+0.10}_{-0.10}$	3987^{+2576}_{-2064}	$0.76^{+0.10}_{-0.10}$
050713A.....	73	1.30 ± 0.07	11.0	$42.0^{+3.20}_{-2.90}$	$2.29^{+0.13}_{-0.14}$	321^{+107}_{-38}	$0.71^{+0.08}_{-0.17}$
050713B.....	136	0.70 ± 0.11	18.0	$20.0^{+4.90}_{-4.50}$	$2.88^{+0.14}_{-0.13}$	540^{+47}_{-44}	$0.43^{+0.06}_{-0.06}$
050714B.....	151	4.50 ± 0.70	5.30	$63.0^{+13.4}_{-11.7}$	$6.96^{+0.60}_{-0.60}$	366^{+38}_{-38}	$0.52^{+0.11}_{-0.11}$
050716.....	96	0.33 ± 0.03	11.0	...	$2.09^{+0.04}_{-0.03}$	1700^{+434}_{-329}	$1.02^{+0.07}_{-0.08}$
050717.....	79	0.63 ± 0.11	23.0	$31.0^{+6.50}_{-6.10}$	$1.95^{+0.18}_{-0.11}$	318^{+115}_{-95}	$1.29^{+0.08}_{-0.08}$
050721.....	186	0.74 ± 0.15	16.0	$19.0^{+6.40}_{-5.70}$	$2.35^{+0.16}_{-0.16}$	380^{+30}_{-30}	$1.22^{+0.03}_{-0.03}$
050724.....	74	0.95 ± 0.07	59 ^b	...	$4.03^{+0.18}_{-0.15}$	508^{+120}_{-31}	$1.82^{+0.24}_{-0.28}$
050726.....	110	0.94 ± 0.07	4.70	...	$0.97^{+0.30}_{-0.30}$	7754^{+1646}_{-2162}	$1.78^{+0.30}_{-0.25}$
050730.....	130	0.33 ± 0.08	3.10	$140^{+37.0a}_{-35.0}$	$2.21^{+0.44}_{-0.44}$	222^{+25}_{-21}	$0.35^{+0.30}_{-0.20}$
050801.....	61	0.72 ± 0.54	7.00	...	$0.96^{+0.04}_{-0.04}$	...	...
050802.....	289	0.91 ± 0.19	1.80	...	$0.64^{+0.10}_{-0.09}$	6036^{+1667}_{-850}	$1.66^{+0.06}_{-0.06}$
050803.....	152	0.71 ± 0.16	5.60	$20.0^{+8.60a}_{-7.70}$	$5.15^{+0.26}_{-0.26}$	272^{+12}_{-8}	$0.59^{+0.03}_{-0.04}$
050813.....	73	2.42 ± 0.89	4.00	...	$2.00^{+0.50}_{-0.50}$	...	...
050814.....	138	1.08 ± 0.08	2.60	$2.20^{+1.35}_{-1.27}$	$3.03^{+0.09}_{-0.08}$	1039^{+130}_{-109}	$0.66^{+0.08}_{-0.08}$
050819.....	141	1.18 ± 0.23	4.70	...	$4.39^{+0.50}_{-0.50}$	269^{+40}_{-21}	$2.09^{+0.53}_{-0.57}$
050820A.....	80	0.87 ± 0.09	4.60	...	$2.22^{+0.23}_{-0.22}$	2060^{+1850}_{-1850}	$1.13^{+0.02}_{-0.02}$
050822.....	96	1.60 ± 0.06	2.30	$13.0^{+1.00}_{-0.90}$	$2.81^{+0.25}_{-0.25}$	279^{+117}_{-117}	$0.39^{+0.12}_{-0.14}$
050826.....	109	1.27 ± 0.47	22.0	$65.0^{+51.8}_{-44.2}$	$1.19^{+0.07}_{-0.05}$	...	...
050904.....	161	0.44 ± 0.04	4.90	$355^{+10.0a}_{-97.0}$	$1.81^{+0.06}_{-0.06}$	...	...
050908.....	106	2.35 ± 0.27	2.10	...	$1.04^{+0.07}_{-0.13}$	...	...
050915A.....	87	1.12 ± 0.34	1.90	$15.0^{+9.00}_{-9.00}$	$2.87^{+1.40}_{-1.40}$	144^{+21}_{-30}	$0.89^{+0.03}_{-0.03}$
050915B.....	136	1.45 ± 0.10	30.0	...	$5.21^{+0.16}_{-0.16}$	437^{+15}_{-15}	$0.66^{+0.08}_{-0.08}$
050916.....	210	0.77 ± 0.84	122	...	$0.79^{+0.08}_{-0.08}$	...	...
050922B.....	342	1.64 ± 0.08	3.40	$12.0^{+1.70}_{-1.50}$	$3.04^{+0.18}_{-0.18}$	2971^{+388}_{-388}	$0.30^{+0.08}_{-0.08}$
050922C.....	108	1.10 ± 0.09	5.80	...	$1.19^{+0.02}_{-0.02}$	...	...

^a In rest frame.

^b From Vaughan et al. (2006b).

For GRB 50319 automatic triggering was disabled during the start of the burst as *Swift* was slewing, and the GRB actually started some 135 s before the BAT trigger (Cusumano et al. 2006). For that GRB we include all data following the onset of the burst determined from the pre- and post-BAT-trigger light curve using the t_0 from Cusumano et al. (2006).

We have visually judged when to exclude flares and short-duration changes of slope to provide the early XRT decay index (α_1). We stress, however, that such a representation is indicative of, rather than completely representative of, the complex X-ray light curves. We return to this issue in § 7, where we adopt a more automatic approach to parameterize the light curve and to select t_0 . Unlike Nousek et al. (2006), we do not distinguish in Table 3 between those bursts that decay rapidly or slowly in the earliest XRT observations. That is, we do not group bursts into decay phases based on assuming that an early steep decay phase is always visible—we show later that this is not always the case. Rather, the values of α_1 and α_2 given in Table 3 correspond to the decay rates on either side of the first clearly observed temporal break in the XRT light curve. In some bursts no break in X-ray temporal slope is clearly detected using the XRT data alone, in which case only α_1 is tabulated. The mean value of α_1 is 2.45, with a standard deviation of 1.55.

X-ray spectra were obtained from the early data and fitted with a single power-law model, allowing for both Galactic (Dickey & Lockman 1990) and intrinsic absorption using the wabs model in XSPEC. The default cross sections and abundances were used (Morrison & McCammon 1983; Anders & Ebihara 1982). The derived early XRT spectral indices (β_x) and absorbing columns are given in Table 3. In general, little evidence is found for spectral evolution across early temporal breaks (see also Nousek et al. 2006), but where evolution is seen the XRT spectrum tends to get harder. Aside from GRB 050525A, where photo-diode mode data were used, the data used for the XRT spectra were obtained from the first orbit of WT data (prebreak for GRB 050219A and preflare for GRB 050502B) or the first orbit of PC mode data (GRBs 050126, 050128, 050315, 050319 [prebreak], 050401, 050406 [preflare], 050412, 050416A [prebreak], 050607, 050813, 050826, 050908, and 050916).

A majority of the GRBs show evidence for excess absorption above the Galactic column at the >99% confidence level. The excesses given in Table 3 have been converted to rest-frame absorbing columns for those GRBs for which a redshift is known. For the bursts with redshifts, the intrinsic column ranges from 2×10^{21} up to 3.5×10^{22} cm⁻², consistent with the idea that these GRBs occur in a molecular cloud environment (Reichart & Price 2002; Campana et al. 2006).

5. COMBINING THE BAT AND XRT LIGHT CURVES

As the BAT and XRT data cover different energy bands and seldom overlap in time, to compare them, the data for one instrument must be extrapolated into the bandpass of the other. We have chosen to use the 0.3–10 keV bandpass to determine fluxes, as the bulk of the temporal data, particularly during the decline, were obtained using the XRT.

In Figure 1 we plot the distribution of β_b and β_x . The solid line shows equality of spectral index. There is a trend such that the early XRT data are fitted by a systematically softer power law than the BAT data (i.e., $\beta_x > \beta_b$). The mean values of β_b (using single power-law fits) and β_x are 0.74 and 1.16, with standard deviations of 0.50 and 0.76, respectively.

The spectral trend is in the same sense as the known tendency for GRB prompt gamma-ray emission to become softer at later times (Ford et al. 1995). We have used this tendency when

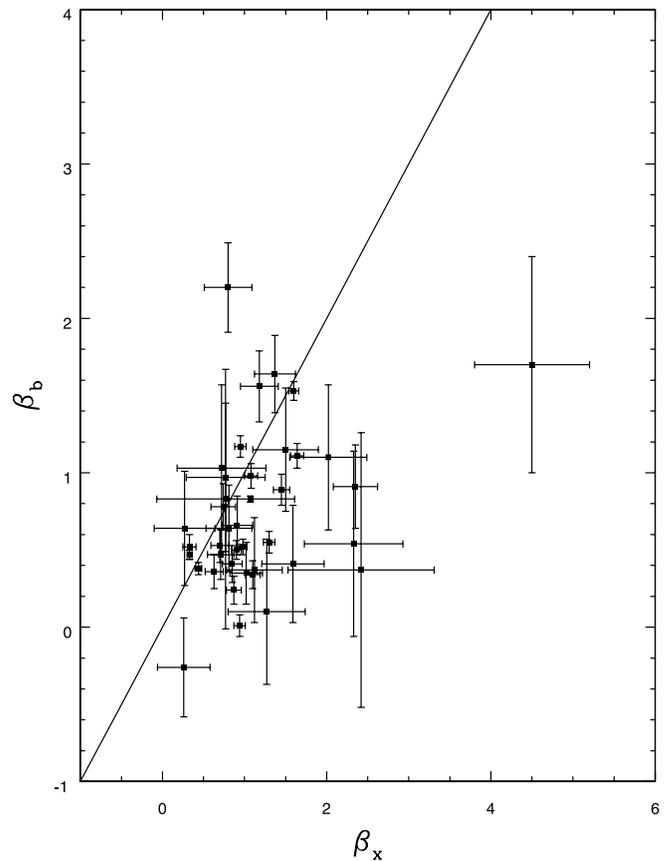


FIG. 1.—Relationship between the BAT (β_b) and early XRT (β_x) spectral indices. The solid line shows equality. This plot illustrates that the early X-ray spectrum observed by the XRT tends to be softer than the prompt gamma-ray emission observed by the BAT.

combining the BAT and XRT data to form the unabsorbed, 0.3–10 keV flux light curves shown in Figure 2. These light curves were constructed by (1) converting the XRT count rates into unabsorbed fluxes using the power-law model parameters as given in Table 3, and (2) converting the BAT 15–150 keV count rates into unabsorbed 0.3–10 keV fluxes by extrapolating the BAT data to the XRT band using a power-law model with a spectral index, which is the mean of the XRT and best-fit BAT spectral indices. This method was used for all bursts except GRB 050714B, for which the early XRT spectral index is exceptionally soft and appears to evolve rapidly (Levan et al. 2006). For GRB 050714B we have used the β_b from Table 1 to convert BAT counts to flux. It should be noted that in Figure 2 the time axis is limited at 10^5 s to emphasize the early part of the light curve. For some bursts, observations continued beyond that time, and all data were included when performing the temporal fits given in Table 3 and when analyzing the data further in § 6.

The observed spectra for the BAT and XRT and the ratio of the spectra to a power law are also shown in Figure 2. In these plots the relative normalizations of the XRT and BAT data were allowed to be free parameters while the spectral index was frozen at the single power-law value obtained for the BAT. The residuals illustrate the generally softer X-ray spectrum seen by the XRT compared to the BAT.

6. THE OBSERVED EARLY TEMPORAL AND SPECTRAL SHAPE

The observed GRB properties for the *Swift* sample in terms of spectral hardness and duration indicate that it is broadly

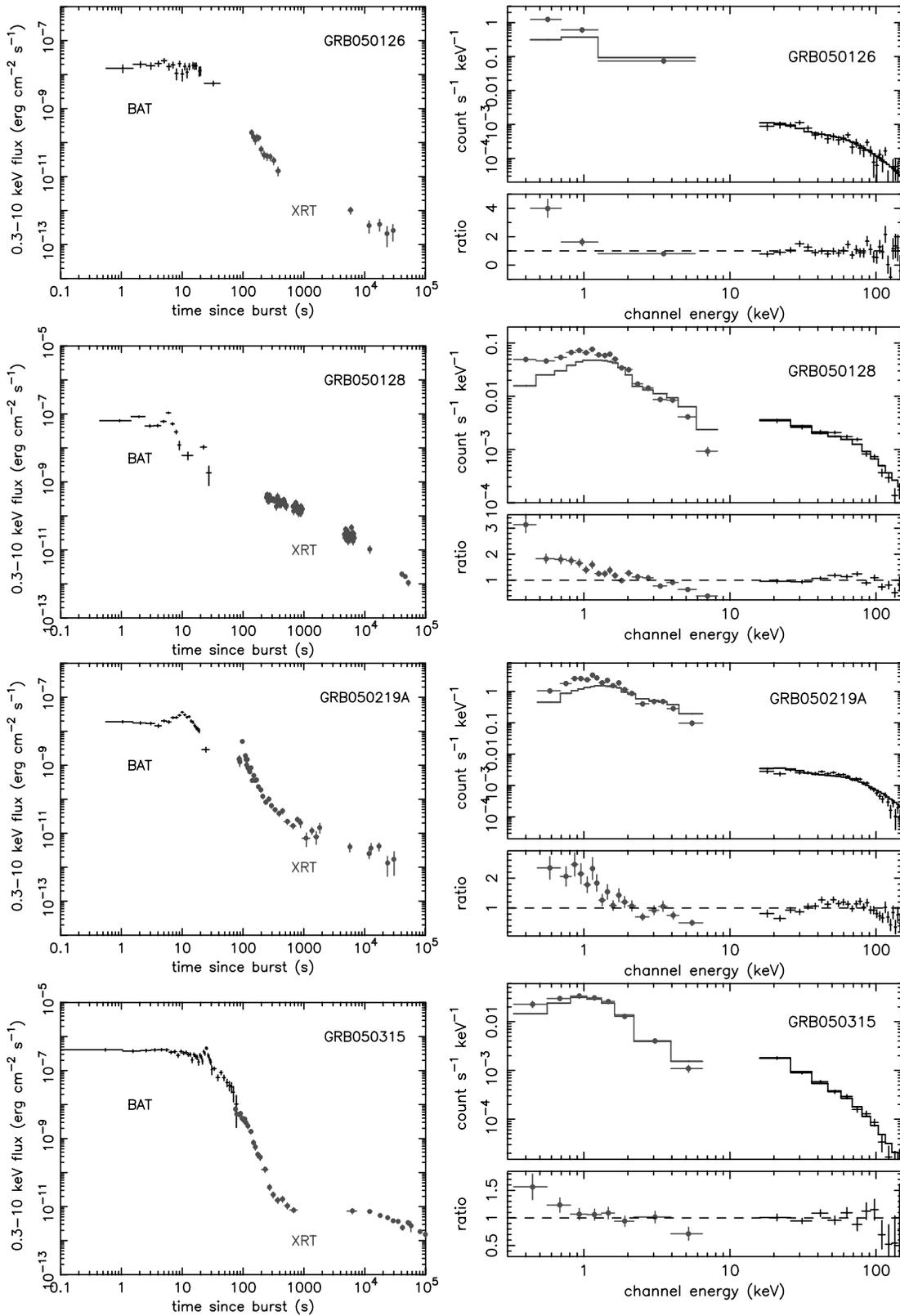


FIG. 2.—Left-hand panels show the combined BAT+XRT unabsorbed 0.3–10 keV flux light curves plotted out to 10⁵ s. Right-hand panels show the spectra relative to the power law derived from fitting the BAT data. These plots were constructed as described in the text. [See the electronic edition of the *Journal* for a color version of this figure.]

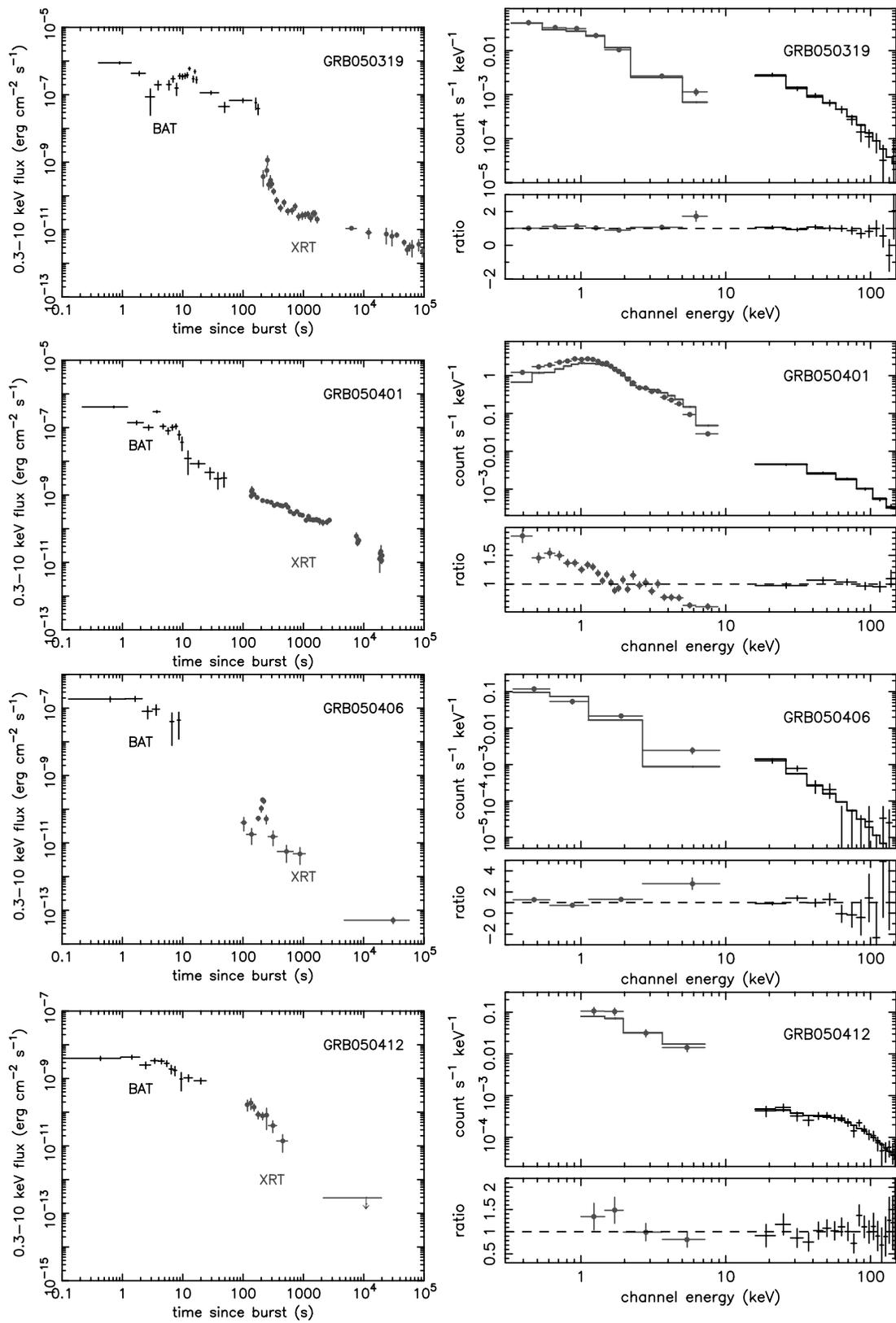
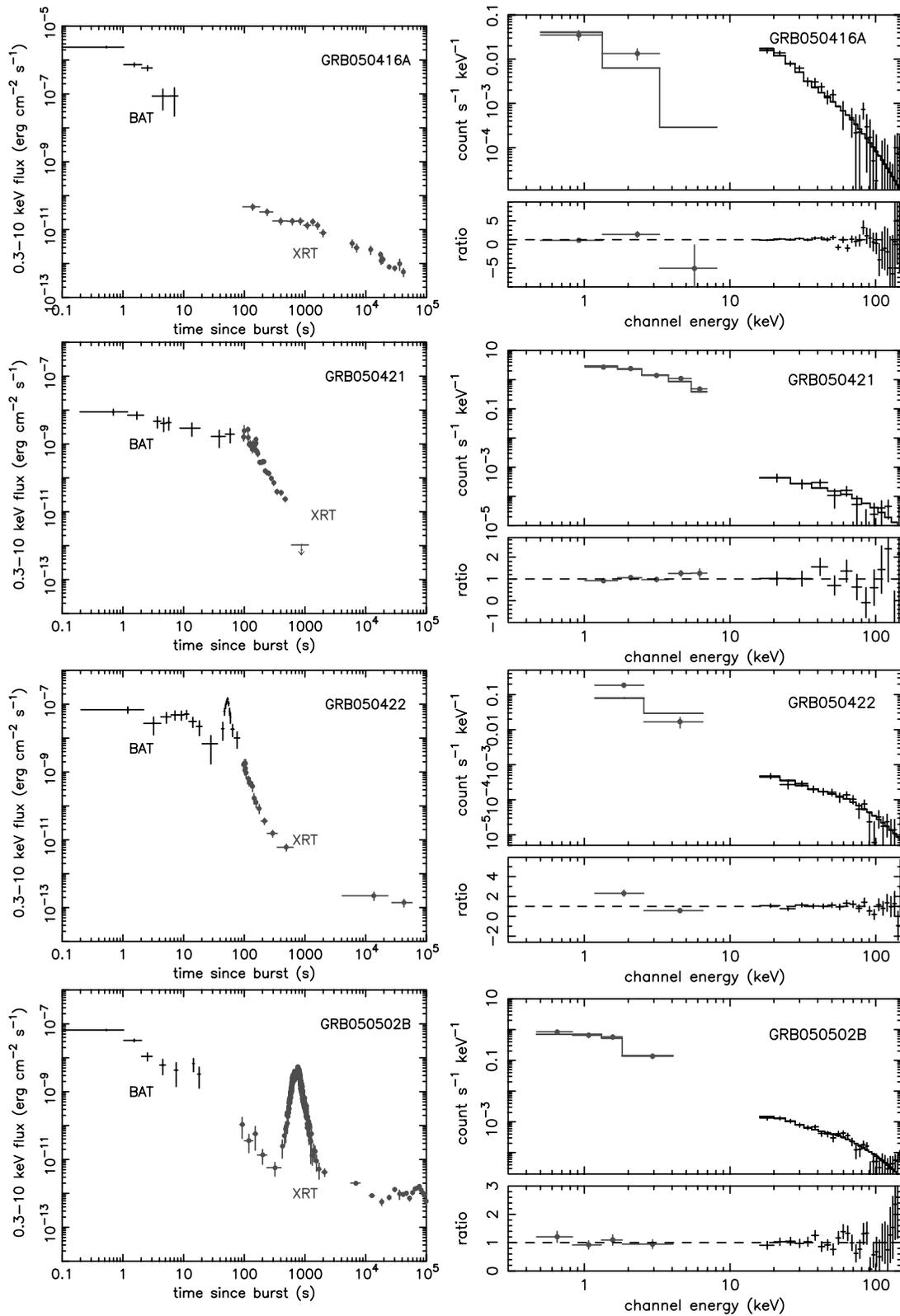


FIG. 2.— *Continued*

FIG. 2.—*Continued*

representative of the GRB population observed by BATSE (Kouveliotou et al. 1993; Berger et al. 2005). The difference is that *Swift* provides X-ray data over a much longer time interval than previous missions and can detect GRBs with lower mean fluxes. Combining the BAT and XRT data also allows for a view

of the prompt phase of GRB emission with little or no temporal gap.

Although GRB light curves can have considerable structure superimposed on the overall decline (see below) following the initial burst, the data shown in Figure 2 strongly suggest that

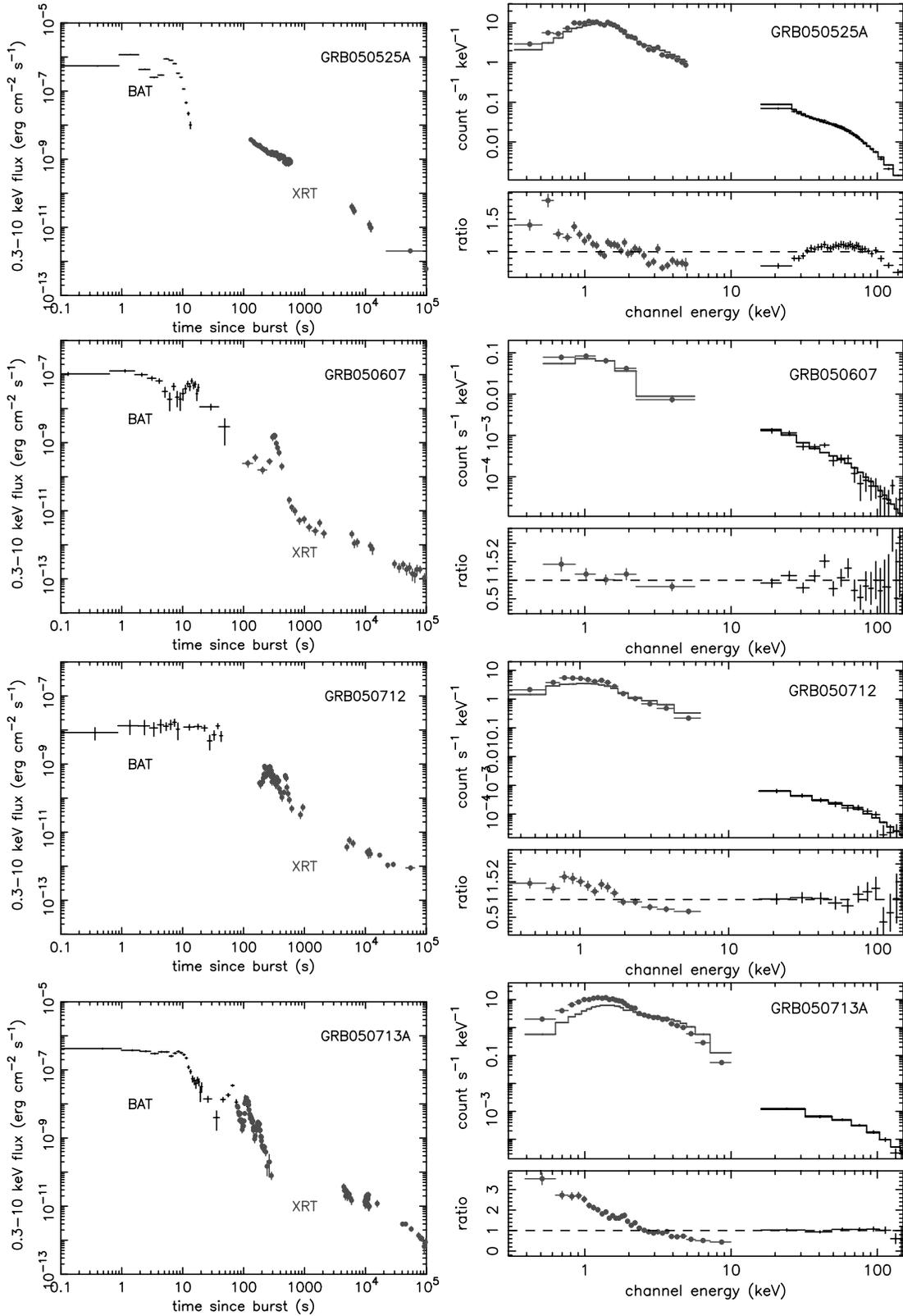
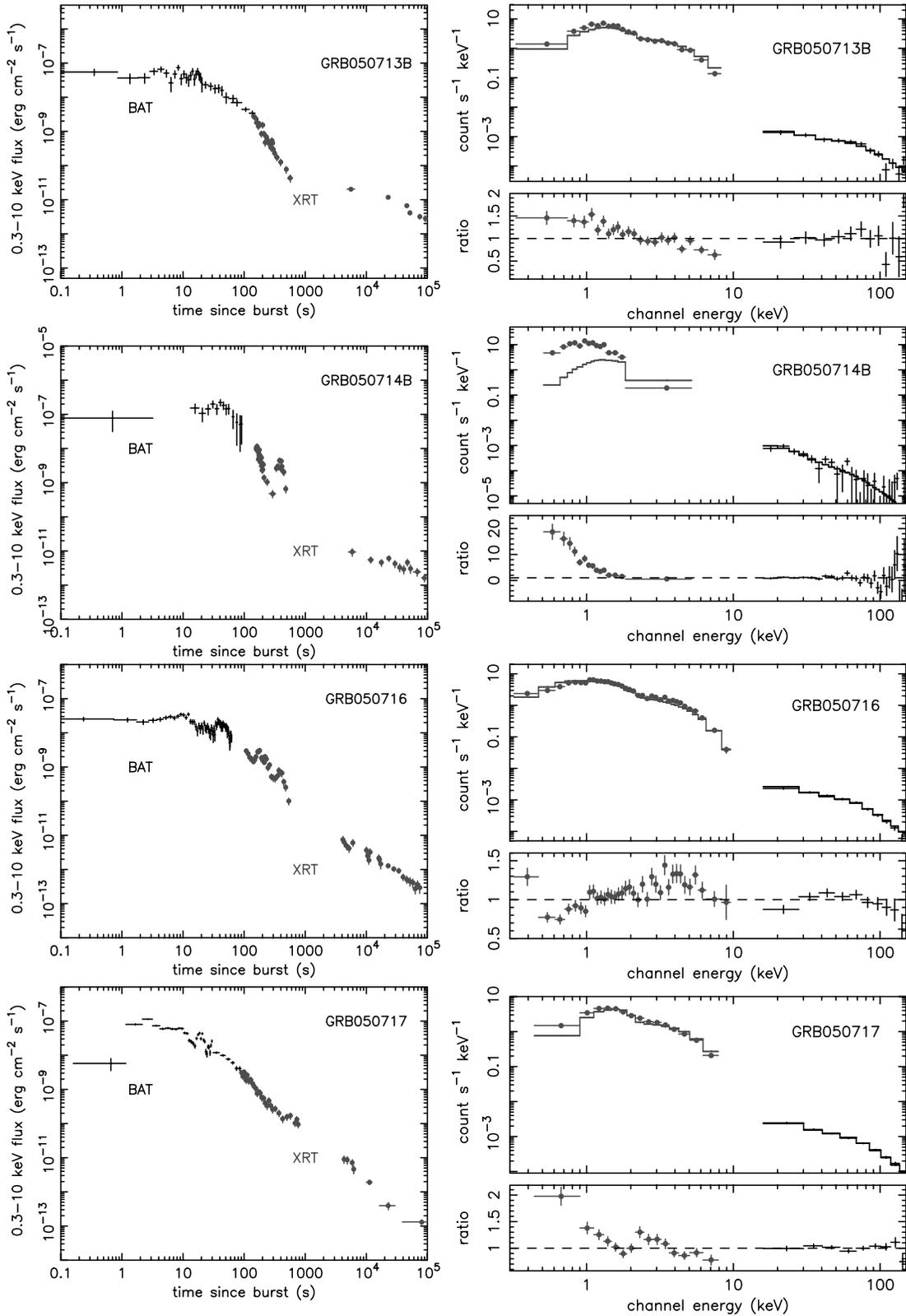


FIG. 2.—Continued

there is no discontinuity between the emission seen by the BAT and the later emission seen by the XRT. In every case where the burst was long enough for the XRT to start observing before the end of T_{90} , the BAT and XRT light curves join smoothly. For those GRBs where there is a temporal gap of only a few tens of s

light curves can be smoothly extrapolated to join. For those GRBs with a short T_{90} the extrapolation is naturally over a longer time, but even for these cases the BAT and XRT data appear to join up.

The only cases for which there is a temporal gap and where the extrapolated BAT light curve may not agree with the XRT

FIG. 2.—*Continued*

are GRB 050219A and possibly GRB 050525A. For GRB 050219A, allowing for the spectral evolution observed by the BAT does not resolve this problem (Tagliaferri et al. 2005; Goad et al. 2006). The apparent discontinuity could, however, be due to an X-ray flare in this burst around 90 s after the trigger. As

noted above, the presence of late X-ray flares in GRBs is now known to be common. For GRB 050525A, which like GRB 050219A is best fitted by a cutoff power law in the BAT, some spectral evolution or an early break in the light curve similar to that in GRB 050713A could be responsible.

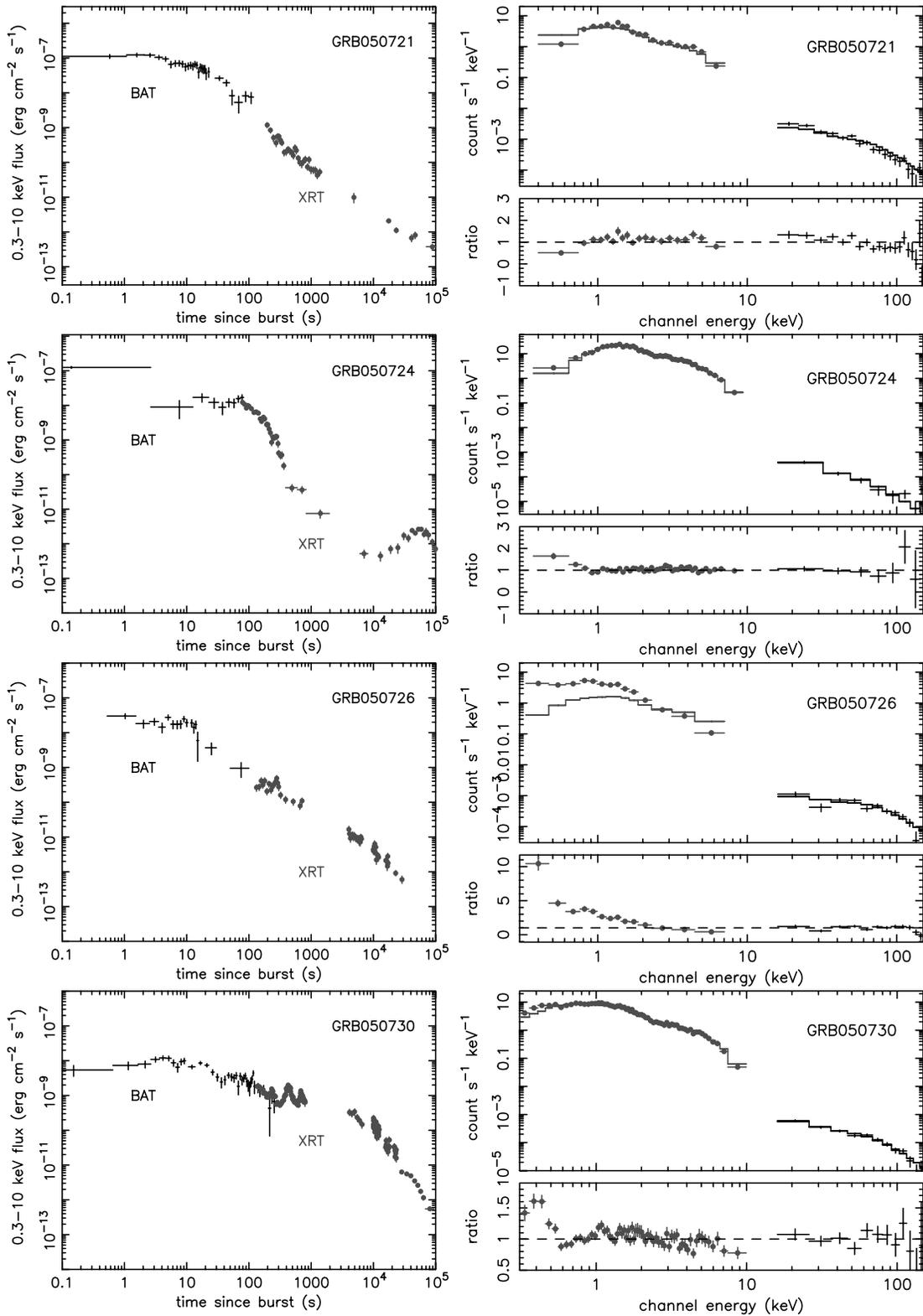
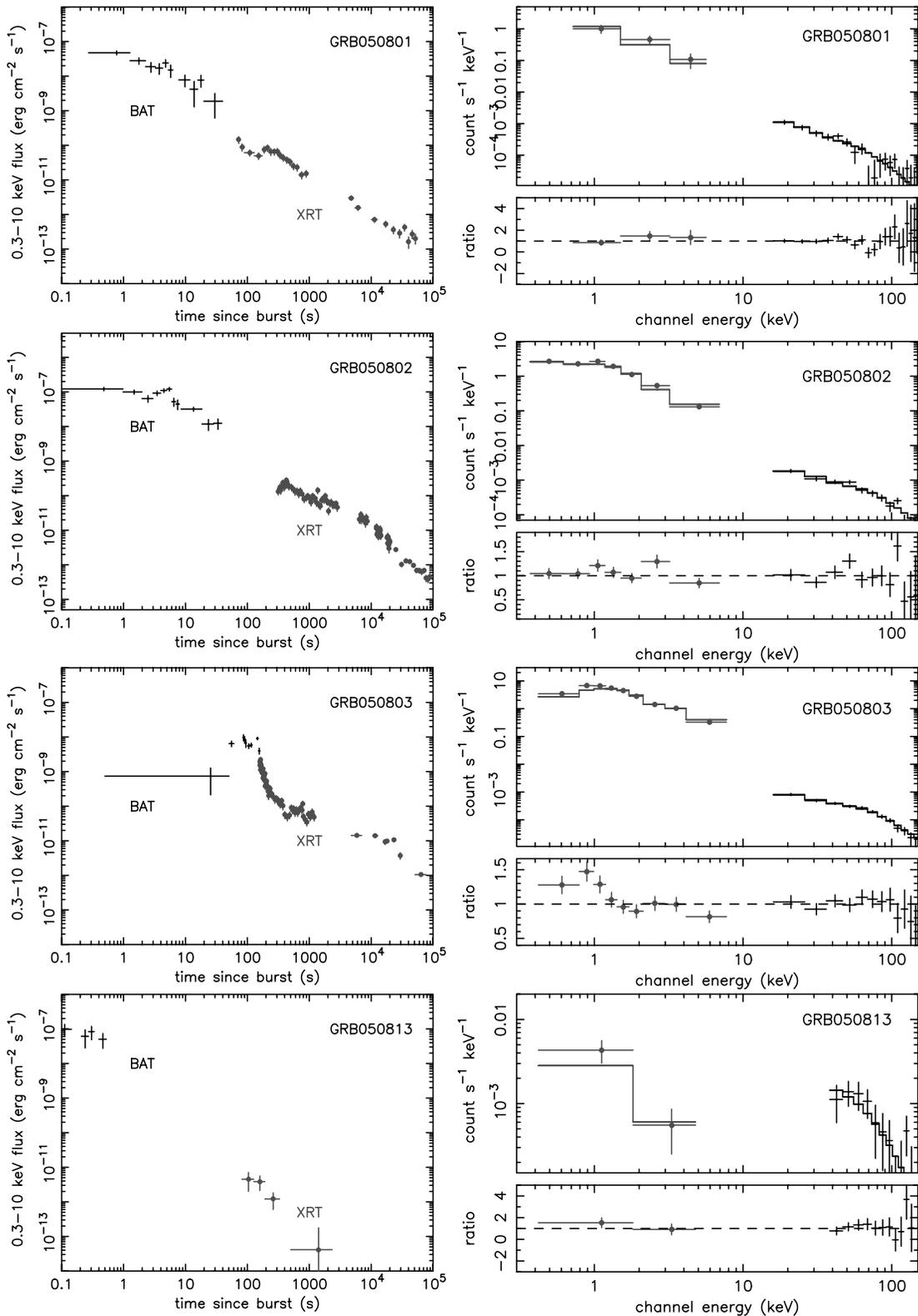


FIG. 2.—Continued

For the five bursts excluded from detailed analysis, no counts were detected with the XRT for GRBs 050906 and 050925. The combined BAT+XRT X-ray light curve for GRB 050815 suggests that it declined rapidly before 100 s and then decayed more slowly until a few thousand s, similar to the X-ray decay seen in GRB

050509B (Gehrels et al. 2005). GRB 050117A, which was observed while *Swift* was in the South Atlantic Anomaly, appears to display a rapid decline after the prompt phase, followed by a shallow decline until 10 ks (Hill et al. 2006), and hence is consistent with the behavior of the rest of the long bursts in the sample.

FIG. 2.—*Continued*

As GRBs are by their very nature transient, all bursts show a decline following the prompt phase. The rate of decline, and how long it lasts, varies. This is indicated by the large standard deviation in α_1 noted above. Visual inspection of the light curves shows that some two-thirds of the GRBs have X-ray light curves that

show an early, more rapid phase of decline, which then breaks to a late emission hump. This temporal break is observed to occur over a wide range of times but is usually within the first hour and is clearly not a jet break. The remaining GRBs seem to have a continuous decline. Those that do not seem to flatten have only a

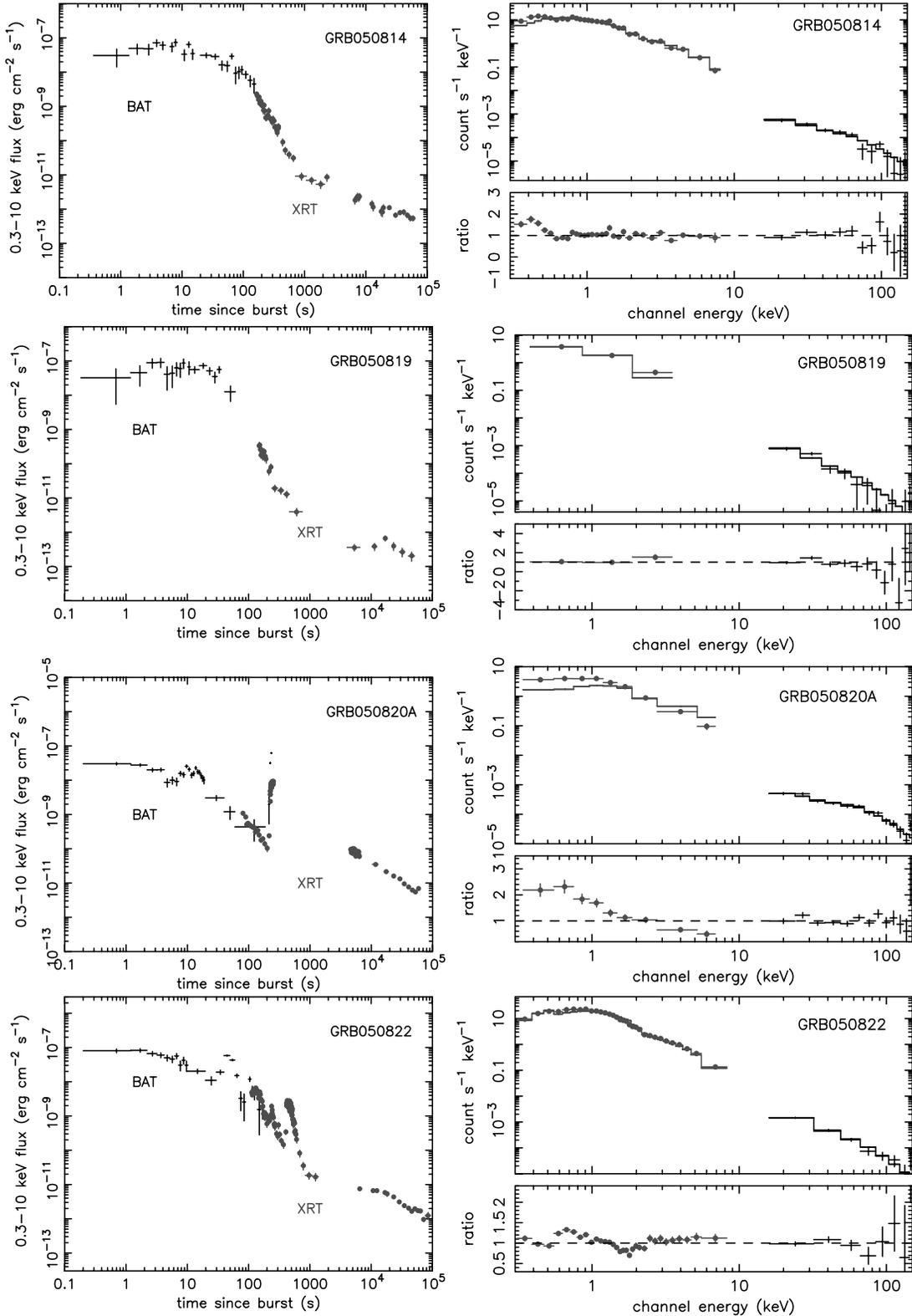
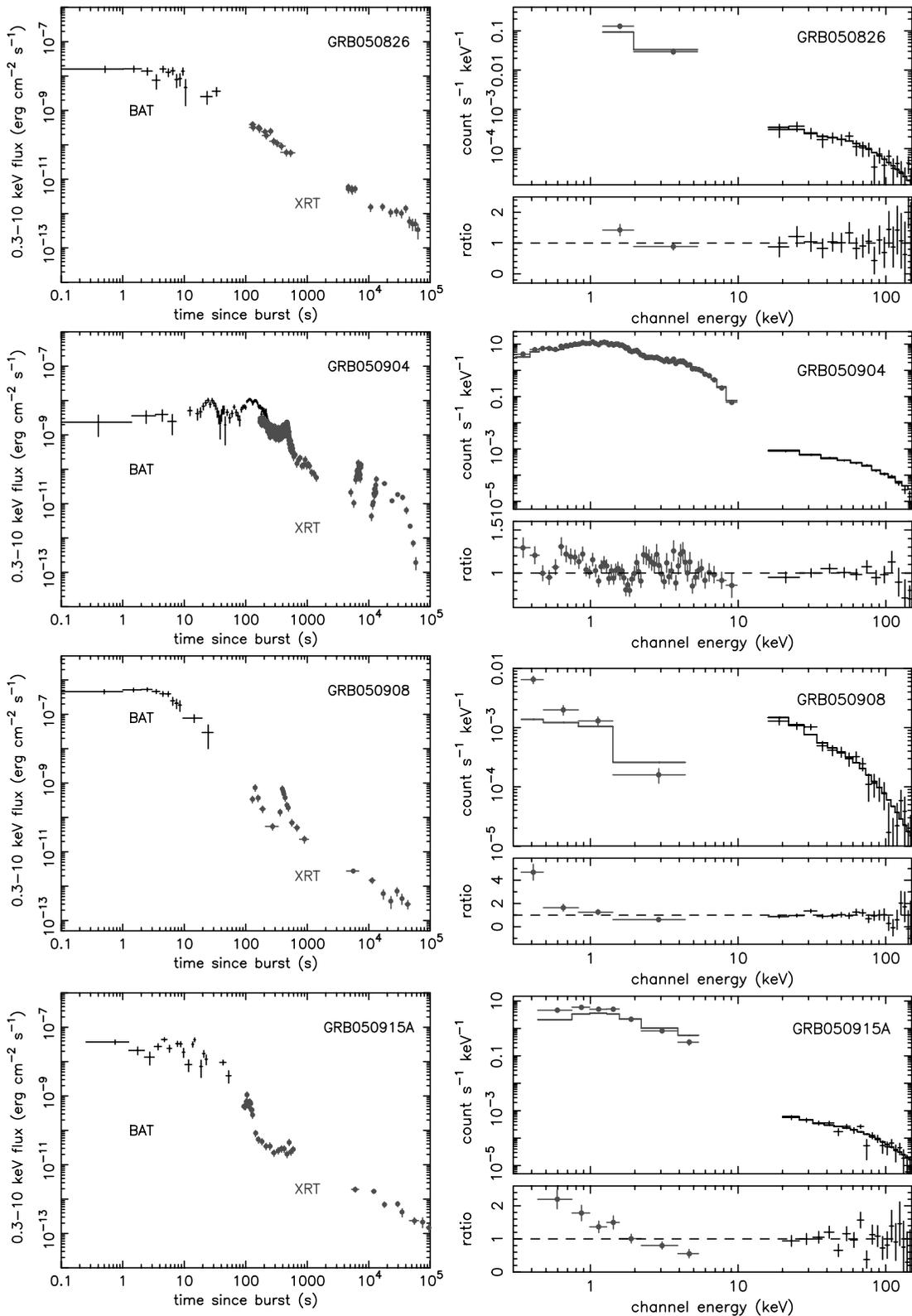


FIG. 2.— *Continued*

single (α_1) decay index given in Table 3. The mean value of the X-ray spectral index is not different between those GRBs with or without a rapid decay phase.

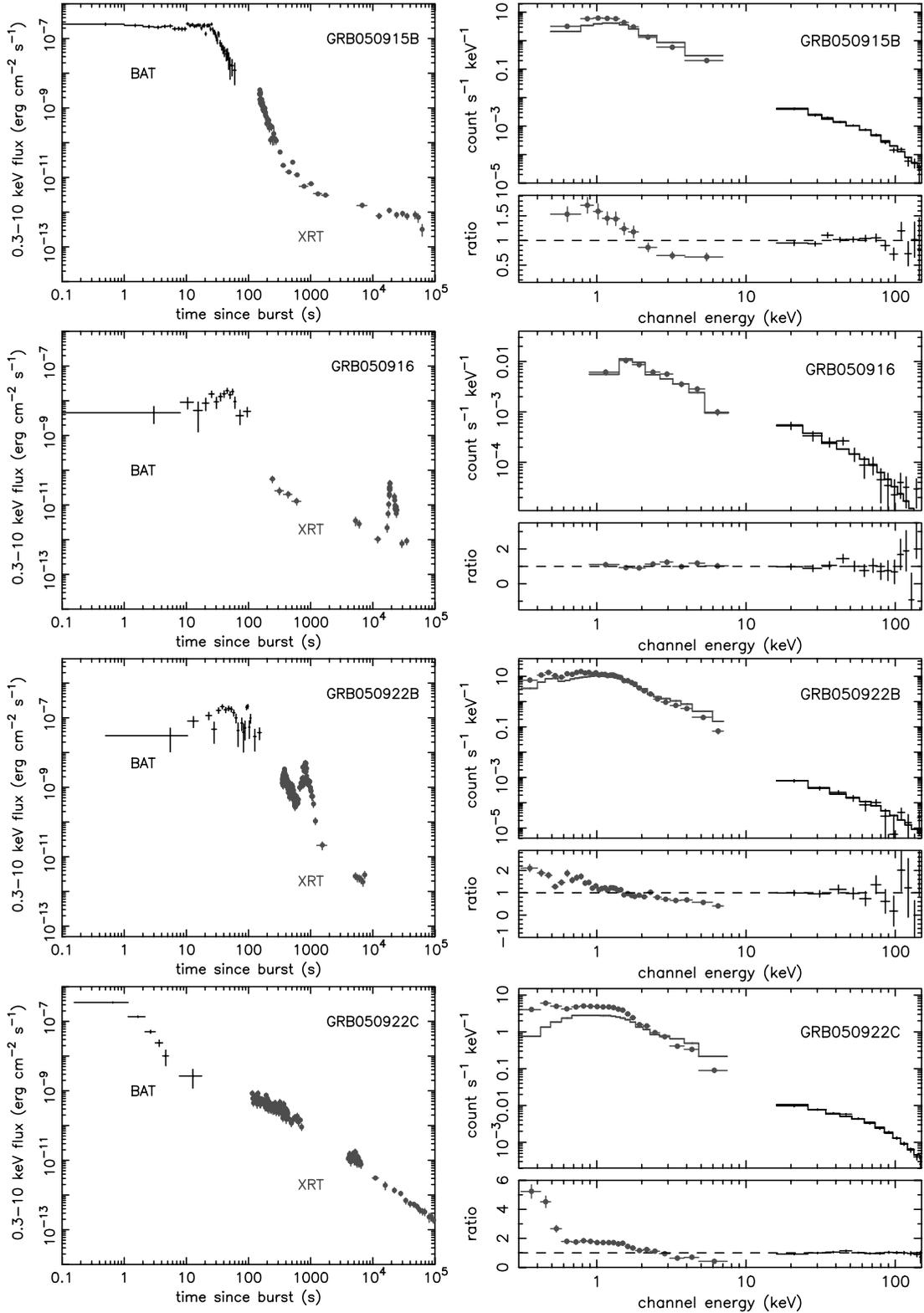
Around half of the GRBs appear to show late ($t > T_{90}$) X-ray flares. These include GRBs 050406, 050502B, 050607, 050713A,

050714B, 050716, 050724, 050801, 050813, 050820A, 050822, 050904, 050908, 050916, and 050922B. A few others (e.g., GRBs 050219A, 050319, 050802, and 050915A) may have flares at the start of the XRT observation. Most of these flares contain the equivalent of 10% or less of the prompt fluence, but

FIG. 2.— *Continued*

in a few cases have $>50\%$ (e.g., GRB 050502B [Burrows et al. 2005b] and GRB 050820A [J. Osborne et al. 2006, in preparation]). There is no significant difference between the rate of flares for those GRBs with or without a very steep decline X-ray phase.

Neither α_1 nor β_x are significantly correlated with T_{90} . There is a weak correlation between α_1 and β_x (Fig. 3; Spearman rank correlation coefficient $r = 0.30$, significant at 95%), although this depends on including GRB 050714B. In contrast, over a wide range in α_1 , there is a very strong correlation between $(\alpha_1 - \beta_x)$

FIG. 2.— *Continued*

and α_1 (Fig. 4; $r = 0.89$, significant at $\gg 99.9\%$). The sense of the correlation is such that those GRBs with shallower temporal decays have a smaller difference between their temporal and spectral indices. This correlation is consistent with no strong dependence of β_x on α_1 .

It has been suggested (e.g., Nousek et al. 2006; Zhang et al. 2006) that the steeply declining early X-ray emission seen in early XRT observations can be interpreted in terms of “high-latitude” emission (Kumar & Panaitescu 2000). In this model, if the physical process producing the X-ray emission (such as

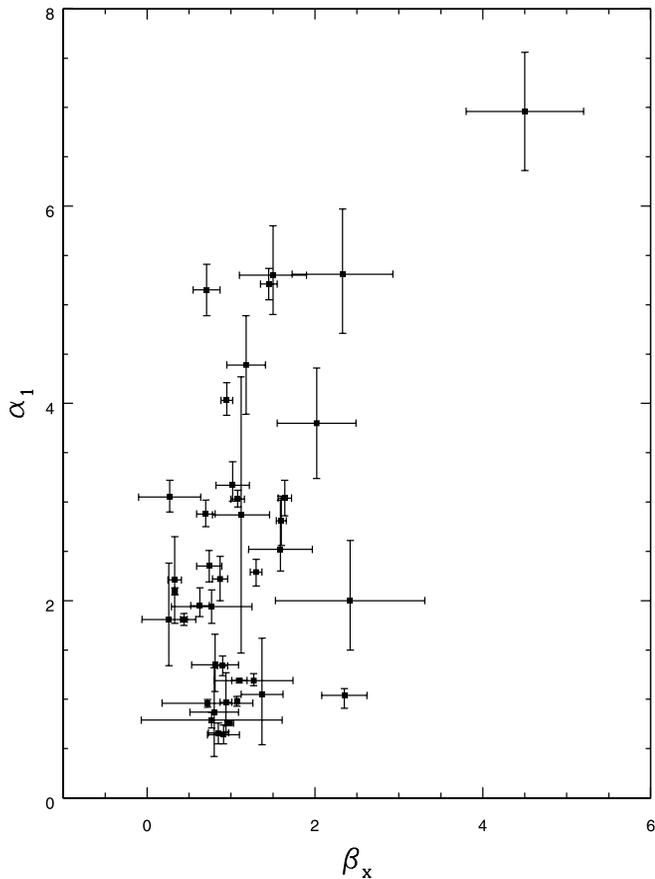


FIG. 3.—Relationship between the observed X-ray temporal (α_1) and spectral (β_x) indices. The outlier at top right is GRB 050714B.

internal shock activity) stops, the observed emission continues for a short time as the observer continues to see emission from those parts of the jet that are off the immediate line of sight. Thus, emission at angles θ from the line of sight that are in excess of $\theta = \Gamma_{\text{jet}}^{-1}$ start to dominate the observed emission, where Γ_{jet} is the jet Lorentz factor. For a uniform surface brightness jet, the energy in some bandpass falls as $t^{-\beta-2}$, where the spectrum is $\propto \nu^{-\beta}$ (Kumar & Panaitescu 2000). In terms of spectral index, this model predicts a relation such that $\alpha - \beta = 2$ for the early, rapidly declining part of the temporal decay. It is possible to get a shallower decay if viewing a structured jet off-axis (Dyks et al. 2006), although the general trend is similar to the standard high-latitude model.

From Figure 4, for the entire sample, α_1 appears to be largely independent of β_x or at least is not simply related. This is inconsistent with the concept that the early X-ray emission is usually dominated by high-latitude emission in a uniform jet. An alternative explanation for the early X-ray emission GRBs is afterglow emission, but this also predicts a specific relation between the spectral and temporal indices, as discussed below. Overall, the data shown in Figure 4 suggest that no single model explains all of the bursts.

To try and force a fit with a particular model we could adjust the start time of the time series, t_0 , to some point in the prompt light curve such that the relation between α and β fits a particular model and is not simply defined by the BAT trigger time (e.g., moving forward to a late flare, if one is observed, or earlier to a visually estimated start time). Rather than adopt such a subjective and model-dependent approach, we have developed a method to automatically align the light curves. In §§ 7 and 8 we

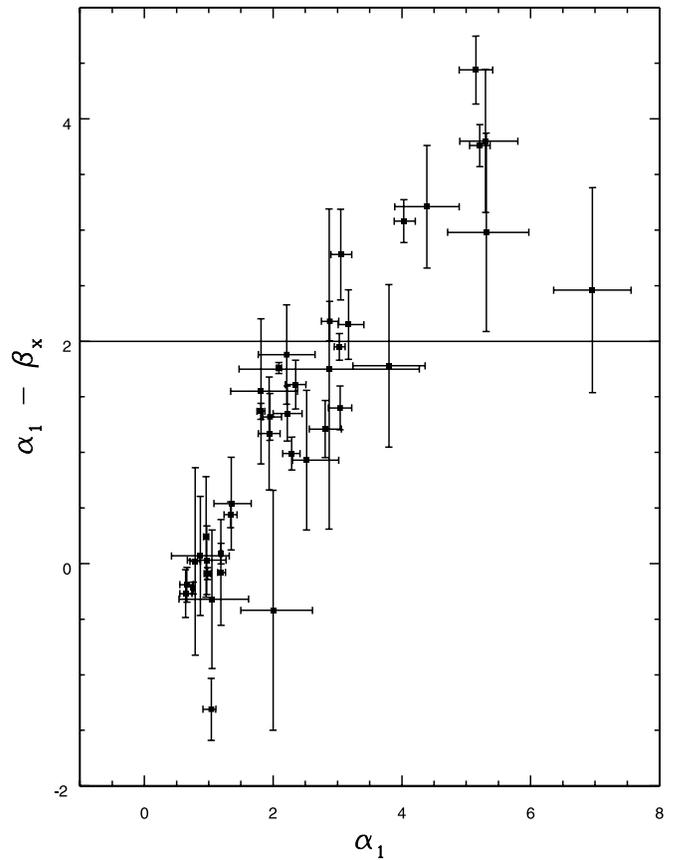


FIG. 4.—Difference between the observed X-ray temporal (α_1) and spectral (β_x) indices, derived from the early XRT data, as a function of temporal index. The horizontal line shows $\alpha_1 - \beta_x = 2$, as predicted by the high-latitude emission model (Kumar & Panaitescu 2000).

use this technique to investigate the early X-ray light curve in GRBs and hence determine the contribution of likely emission components.

7. THE GLOBAL GRB X-RAY DECAY CURVE

In order to compare light curves for different GRBs and to study the different phases of the X-ray emission, we have developed a procedure to fit light curves. This procedure, described below, attempts to provide a best fit to the “global light curve” for all our GRBs, assuming there is a generic pattern to their behavior. It uses information from the combined BAT+XRT flux light curve for each burst and can adjust the start of the time series (i.e., move t_0) and the temporal scale of the decay while also allowing for deviations from the global decay (referred to as flares and humps below) to derive a standard set of parameters for each burst.

An average X-ray decay curve expressed by log (time) as a function of log (flux), $\tau(F)$, and log (flux) as a function of log (time), $F(\tau)$, was derived by taking the sum of scaled versions of each of the individual light curves, $f_i(t_i)$, where t_i is approximately the time since the largest/latest peak in the BAT light curve. The data points were transformed to normalized log (flux), $F_i = \log_{10}(f_i/f_d)$, and log (time) delay values, $\tau_i = \alpha_d \log_{10}(t_i - t_d) - \tau_d$. Four decay parameters (subscript d) specify the transformation for each GRB: f_d , the mean prompt flux; t_d , the start of the decay; τ_d , a time scaling; and α_d , a stretching or compression of time. The flux scaling is a simple linear shift in the log-scale and does not involve any stretching or compression of one GRB with respect to another. Under the transformation all the

light curves conform to an approximately universal behavior with an initial exponential decline $\propto \exp(-t/t_c)$ followed by a power-law decay $\propto t^{-\alpha_0}$.

The transition between the two decay phases occurs when the exponential and power-law functions and their first derivatives are equal, and is given for the average decay curve by $t_0 = t_c \alpha_0$ ($\tau_0 = 1.7$). Adopting this transition, for each GRB we define the division between the prompt and power-law decay phases to be τ_0 , corresponding to a prompt time $T_p = 10^{(\tau_0 + \tau_d)/\alpha_d}$ s. This definition of T_p provides us with an alternative estimate of the duration of each burst that depends on the physical shape of the light curve, takes into account the data from both the BAT and the XRT, and is not bound by the sensitivity of either instrument. It does depend on the chosen energy band and method used to extrapolate. Depending on the particular characteristics of the burst, T_p can be similar to, greater than, or smaller than T_{90} .

The best-fit f_d , t_d , α_d , and τ_d for each GRB were found using a least-squares iteration procedure. Initial values for these parameters were chosen by visual inspection of the light curves, and a first guess for the average decay curve $F_{av}(\tau_{av})$ was set up using nominal values for t_c and α_0 . The zero time t_d was initially set to the position of the largest peak for each burst. The flux was normalized by calculating f_d , which minimized the square difference between the average flux curve and each data point, $\sigma_f = \sum [F_i - F_{av}(\tau_i)]^2$, summing over all data points in the prompt phase $\tau < \tau_0$. In order to perform the least-squares fitting in the time domain, each light curve was binned as temporal delay values over a set of bins in F (rather than averaging the flux values over time bins), and the average temporal delay for each flux bin was calculated. The temporal parameters τ_d , α_d , and t_d were updated minimizing $\sigma_\tau = \sum [\tau_{av}(F_i) - \tau_i]^2$ summing over all the measured values at different flux levels for $\tau_0 < \tau < \tau_h$, where $\tau_h = 3.5$. The upper limit τ_h is set to take into account the late emission hump. Bright flares in the decay phase were excluded during the minimization procedure.

At the end of each iteration the α_d values were scaled so that the mean over all the GRBs was unity, and the τ_d values were offset so that the mean was zero. This ensures that τ has units of \log_{10} (seconds). Using the updated parameter values, a new best guess at the average decay curve was calculated summing over all 40 GRBs. The iteration was stopped when the changes in the parameters were sufficiently small. The average decay curve derived from 40 GRBs, and all the measured flux values from the BAT and XRT (4569 measurements), are shown in Figure 5. The values of T_p are given in Table 4. An example of the transformation for one burst (GRB 050819) is shown in Figure 6. This figure shows that t_d is moving the zero time (hence, some of the early prompt points are before the start time in transformed space). Then τ_d and α_d rescale the units of logarithmic time.

The average decay curve relaxes into a power law with a decay index $\alpha_0 = 2.1$ found by linear regression on the average decay curve for $\tau_0 < \tau < 3.0$. This power-law fit is shown as a dashed line in Figure 5. The fitting procedure results in those GRBs that follow a fairly continuous decay lying close to the power law. At $\tau \sim 3$ the average decay curve starts to rise above the power-law decay in the majority of bursts. This is the start of the late emission hump, which has a large observed variety in strength, which we parameterize below. The range in hump strength results in the somewhat jagged appearance of the average decay curve for $\tau > 3.5$.

GRB 050730 falls below the average decay curve at $\tau \sim 2.5$. This object has the largest value of T_p (373 s) and a decay that gets much steeper at $\tau \approx 2.5$. The last few data points for this source can be seen below the bulk of the data on Figure 5. For

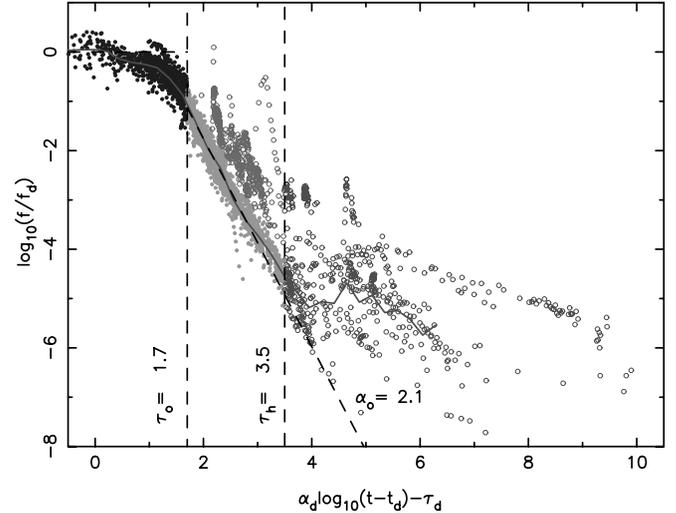


FIG. 5.—Composite decay curve derived from 40 GRBs. See text for details. The filled circles at $\tau < 1.7$ are within time T_p . The average produced by the least-squares procedure is shown as the solid line. The dashed power-law slope indicates the best fit to the initial decay in the average curve derived using the filled circles. The open circles indicate flux measurements that were excluded from the power-law fitting as flares (light gray) or because $\tau > 3.5$ (dark gray). [See the electronic edition of the Journal for a color version of this figure.]

GRB 050319 the fit procedure prefers a fit using the first (larger) peak in the BAT light curve as the burst and treats the second, later peak as a flare. If we force the procedure to adopt a t_0 just before the second, lower flux peak, we derive a very steep early decay index (~ 5) but get a significantly worse fit to the rest of the light curve.

The distribution of $\log_{10}(T_p/T_{90})$ as a function of $\log_{10}(T_{90})$ is shown in Figure 7. For almost all bursts T_p is comparable to or somewhat larger than T_{90} , as expected. For GRB 050421 it is a factor of 17 larger. For this burst, if the BAT data beyond the T_{90} period are binned up, a long tail extending to the start of the XRT observations can be seen (Godet et al. 2006). For GRB 050820A T_p is a factor of 12 smaller than T_{90} . There is a very bright second burst/flare seen from this object, which was excluded from the average curve fitting but which is included when calculating the BAT T_{90} estimate. This second event is brighter than the first (J. Osborne et al. 2006, in preparation).

The early light curves are plotted in linear time relative to T_p , $(t - t_d)/T_p$ in Figure 8. The peaks (global maximum flux measurements for each burst) are shown as filled circles. The notable exception is GRB 050422 (Beardmore et al. 2006), for which the peak occurs at $(t - t_d)/T_p \approx 0.6$. For this burst a large late flare is seen in the BAT, followed by a rapid decay. In this case the fitting procedure has chosen t_d such that the peak falls at the center of the T_p window. GRB 050922B also has a bright flare late in the BAT light curve, giving a peak at $(t - t_d)/T_p \approx 0.35$. Because the peaks are clustered around zero, we can be confident that any temporal indices derived for the subsequent decays relate to the appropriate maximum in the light curve. The line connecting the open circles is a linear fit to the average decay curve. Since this is a linear-log plot, this represents an exponential decay from the initial peak value. The time constant for the exponential decay is $t_c = 0.47T_p$, which is equivalent to $\tau = 1.4$ in Figure 5. The curved solid line is the extrapolated power law.

The initial temporal decay index for individual GRBs can be calculated by multiplying α_0 by the best-fit α_d . GRBs with $\alpha_d > 1$ have decays steeper than average, and those with

TABLE 4
BEST-FIT PARAMETERS DERIVED FROM THE AVERAGE X-RAY DECAY CURVE

GRB	$\alpha_0 \alpha_d$	Δ_F	Δ_H	T_p	α_f
050126.....	2.36 ± 0.20	-0.03 ± 0.31	2.15 ± 0.31	35.1 ± 2.9	1.14 ± 0.49
050128.....	1.13 ± 0.16	0.01 ± 0.12	...	38.7 ± 5.3	0.93 ± 0.34
050219A.....	1.55 ± 0.32	0.03 ± 0.22	1.06 ± 0.31	39.8 ± 8.2	1.56 ± 0.42
050315.....	4.17 ± 0.56	0.08 ± 0.28	9.72 ± 0.18	64.2 ± 8.7	3.27 ± 0.99
050319.....	2.49 ± 0.51	0.40 ± 0.22	3.00 ± 0.23	35.3 ± 7.2	0.25 ± 1.04
050401.....	1.17 ± 0.19	0.08 ± 0.15	0.01 ± 0.89	16.6 ± 2.6	0.06 ± 0.24
050406.....	1.96 ± 0.44	0.48 ± 0.32	0.73 ± 0.47	7.3 ± 1.6	-0.47 ± 0.95
050412.....	0.90 ± 0.14	0.10 ± 0.28	...	12.7 ± 1.9	0.90 ± 0.31
050416A.....	2.00 ± 0.78	-0.32 ± 0.61	2.29 ± 0.23	7.7 ± 3.0	-0.40 ± 1.33
050421.....	2.95 ± 0.22	0.03 ± 0.38	...	172 ± 13	2.56 ± 0.60
050422.....	3.84 ± 0.35	0.00 ± 0.23	7.22 ± 0.29	46.5 ± 4.2	2.70 ± 1.49
050502B.....	2.23 ± 0.53	2.08 ± 0.40	3.92 ± 0.23	32.5 ± 7.8	1.39 ± 0.71
050525A.....	1.40 ± 0.33	0.29 ± 0.24	0.51 ± 0.23	9.0 ± 2.1	0.82 ± 0.38
050607.....	2.00 ± 0.53	0.49 ± 0.23	1.77 ± 0.21	26.6 ± 7.0	0.89 ± 0.83
050712.....	1.61 ± 0.28	0.04 ± 0.12	1.22 ± 0.49	131 ± 22	0.68 ± 0.38
050713A.....	2.51 ± 0.17	1.15 ± 0.12	3.98 ± 0.14	13.9 ± 0.9	1.46 ± 0.24
050713B.....	3.03 ± 0.24	0.03 ± 0.18	5.54 ± 0.41	143 ± 11	2.49 ± 0.33
050714B.....	2.50 ± 0.43	0.20 ± 0.19	3.09 ± 0.27	96 ± 17	-0.09 ± 1.06
050716.....	1.64 ± 0.18	0.09 ± 0.08	0.69 ± 0.30	$124. \pm 14$	1.55 ± 0.29
050717.....	1.73 ± 0.17	0.02 ± 0.11	0.55 ± 0.71	58.4 ± 5.7	1.13 ± 0.22
050721.....	1.72 ± 0.15	-0.04 ± 0.12	1.02 ± 0.49	56.0 ± 5.0	0.71 ± 0.26
050724.....	2.66 ± 0.23	0.04 ± 0.14	3.09 ± 0.30	181 ± 16	1.45 ± 0.43
050726.....	1.36 ± 0.20	0.06 ± 0.10	...	46.5 ± 7.0	0.73 ± 0.28
050730.....	0.87 ± 0.24	0.16 ± 0.12	...	373 ± 102	0.25 ± 0.29
050801.....	1.32 ± 0.24	-0.02 ± 0.23	0.44 ± 0.33	10.3 ± 1.9	0.01 ± 0.64
050802.....	1.24 ± 0.15	0.12 ± 0.10	0.29 ± 0.18	11.1 ± 1.3	0.08 ± 0.29
050803.....	2.21 ± 0.27	0.43 ± 0.15	2.56 ± 0.15	94 ± 11	1.56 ± 0.36
050813.....	1.73 ± 0.21	0.21 ± 0.42	0.30 ± 0.38	0.7 ± 0.1	-0.56 ± 1.16
050814.....	2.81 ± 0.20	0.03 ± 0.10	2.55 ± 0.29	131 ± 9.5	1.71 ± 0.35
050819.....	3.13 ± 0.43	-0.01 ± 0.27	3.69 ± 0.43	55.6 ± 7.6	1.64 ± 0.75
050820A.....	0.95 ± 0.24	0.66 ± 0.17	0.17 ± 0.38	19.3 ± 4.8	0.14 ± 0.29
050822.....	2.24 ± 0.46	0.45 ± 0.08	2.98 ± 0.29	140 ± 29	-0.17 ± 0.77
050826.....	1.13 ± 0.17	0.17 ± 0.26	0.29 ± 0.30	15.5 ± 2.3	0.13 ± 0.53
050904.....	1.69 ± 0.26	0.46 ± 0.13	0.59 ± 0.40	460 ± 71	1.20 ± 0.30
050908.....	2.84 ± 0.42	0.75 ± 0.28	3.29 ± 0.38	42.9 ± 6.3	0.66 ± 0.80
050915A.....	3.76 ± 0.45	0.31 ± 0.21	6.40 ± 0.37	79.9 ± 9.5	3.24 ± 0.66
050915B.....	3.33 ± 0.52	-0.01 ± 0.19	3.93 ± 0.39	82 ± 13	2.23 ± 0.75
050916.....	2.63 ± 0.41	-0.11 ± 0.54	4.06 ± 0.21	84 ± 13	1.79 ± 1.02
050922B.....	2.34 ± 0.22	0.16 ± 0.08	2.53 ± 0.29	143 ± 13	0.43 ± 0.39
050922C.....	1.17 ± 0.17	0.03 ± 0.09	-0.18 ± 0.37	19.4 ± 2.8	0.10 ± 0.23

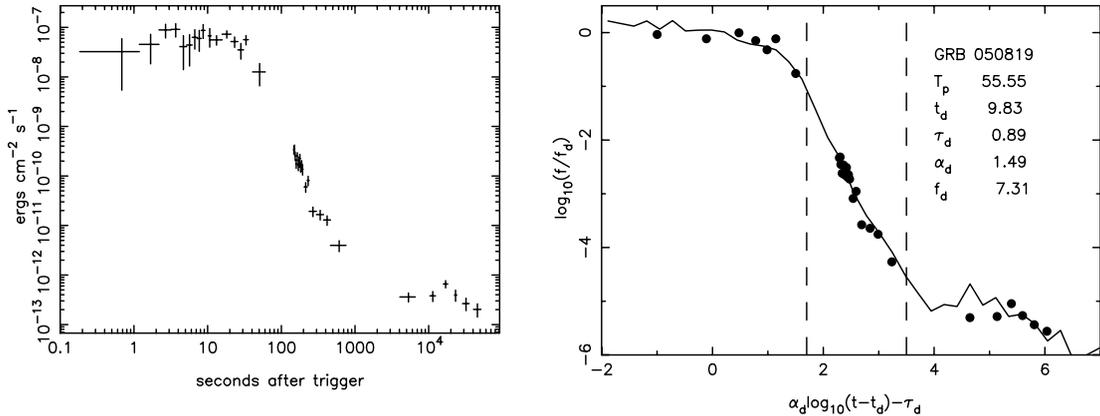


FIG. 6.—*Left*: The unabsorbed 0.3–10 keV flux light curve for GRB 050819. *Right*: Transformed light curve with best-fit parameters. The vertical lines and solid curve are as in Fig. 5.

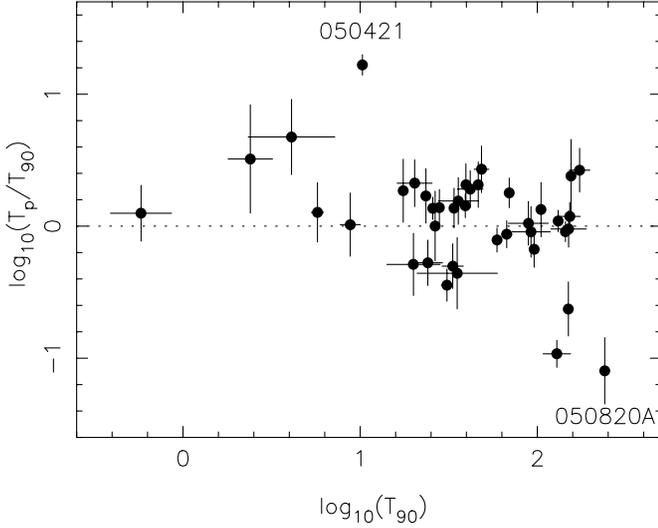


FIG. 7.—Prompt time T_p compared with T_{90} .

$\alpha_d < 1$ have decays shallower than average. In Figure 9 we plot $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ versus the α_1 parameter derived from the XRT light curves (from Table 3). Using the least-squares fit to the average decay curve has reduced the spread of decay index values, and in general the $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ are somewhat smaller than α_1 . The $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ are based on all the available data from both the BAT and XRT and are expected to be a more robust estimate of the global average. In contrast, α_1 provide a snapshot of a particular (often rather short) section in the overall light curve and were derived using the BAT trigger time.

Many of the GRBs have excess flux over and above the average power-law decay. In order to quantify this, we have calculated the average difference, $\sum[F_i - F_{pl}(\tau_i)]/n_r$, between the measured data and the average power-law decay $F_{pl}(\tau)$ over the ranges $\tau_0 < \tau < \tau_h$, giving Δ_F , and over $\tau_h < \tau < 10$, giving Δ_H , summing over the n_r data points that fall within each range. Thus, Δ_F and Δ_H provide a measure of the flaring activity in the power-law decay phase and the strength of the late emission hump. The mean differences are calculated in \log_{10} (flux) and therefore represent \log_{10} of a multiplicative factor over and

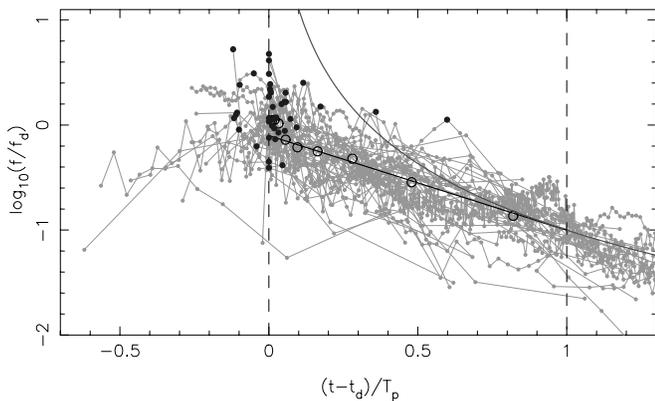


FIG. 8.—Distribution of peak flux times (*filled circles*) about time zero, produced by the least-squares fitting. The connected open circles show the average decay curve relative to the individual light curves plotted in linear time relative to T_p . The curved solid line shows the backward extrapolation of the average power law that fits times above T_p . The vertical dashed lines correspond to 0 and T_p . [See the electronic edition of the *Journal* for a color version of this figure.]

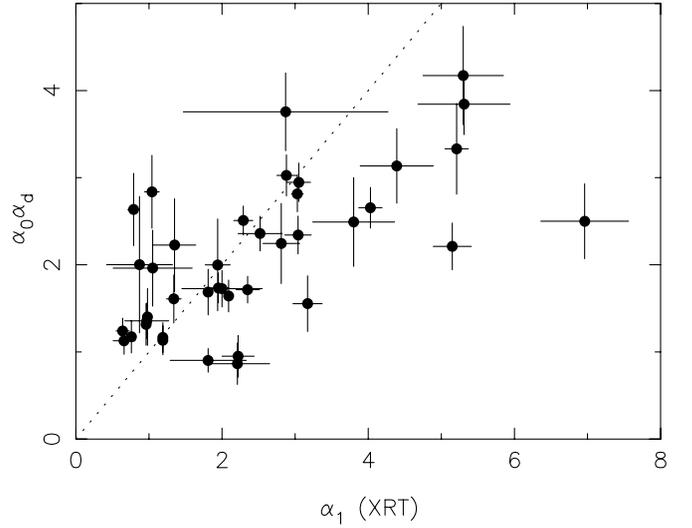


FIG. 9.—Correlation of $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ derived from the global light-curve fit, with α_1 estimated from the XRT light curve. The dotted line shows $\alpha_0\alpha_d = \alpha_1$.

above (or below if negative) the average power-law decay curve. Two bursts, GRB 050202B and GRB 050916, have a flare at $\tau > \tau_h$, which is included in their Δ_H calculation.

The values of Δ_H plotted against Δ_F are shown in Figure 10. There is no correlation between these values. The GRBs in each quadrant are shown as filled circles (no significant flares or hump), squares (flares but no hump), stars (flares and hump), and triangles (hump but no flares). The objects plotted as open circles (with $\Delta_H = 0$) are those for which there are no late data. In most cases, this is because the afterglow was too faint to detect in the XRT and so a value of zero has been taken as a reasonable estimate of Δ_H for these objects.

The values of $\alpha_0\alpha_d$, Δ_F , Δ_H , T_p , and α_f (defined below) for the GRB sample are given in Table 4. Figure 11 shows four examples of scaled GRB light curves plotted with the average decay curve. These examples illustrate GRBs with a range of early decay rates and flares and humps of different strengths.

8. DISCUSSION

The procedure that calculates the average X-ray decay curve generates several parameters for each GRB: f_d , the mean prompt flux level; T_p , the duration of the prompt emission; $\alpha_0\alpha_d$, the temporal decay index of the initial decay; Δ_F , a measure of the level of flaring activity during the initial power-law decay; and Δ_H , a measure of the size of the late emission hump after the initial power-law decay.

The distributions of $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ and $\log_{10}(T_p)$ are shown in Figure 12. There is no correlation between the duration of the burst and the initial decay index. However, the bursts clearly cluster according to the relative prominence of flares or humps.

As shown in Figure 12, the majority of the sample is bunched in the range $4.5 < T_p < 140$ s and $0.9 < \alpha_0\alpha_d < 3.2$. GRB 050730 ($T_p = 157$, $\alpha_0\alpha_d = 0.85$) and GRB 050904 ($T_p = 282$, $\alpha_0\alpha_d = 1.39$), both high-redshift bursts, are somewhat isolated from the main population with relatively long decays and low temporal decay indices. GRB 050813, a short burst, has the smallest T_p .

We can use the values of $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ to test the high-latitude and other emission models. The correlation of $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ with β , the average of the BAT and XRT spectral indices (except for GRB 050714B for which β_b was used), is shown in Figure 13. There

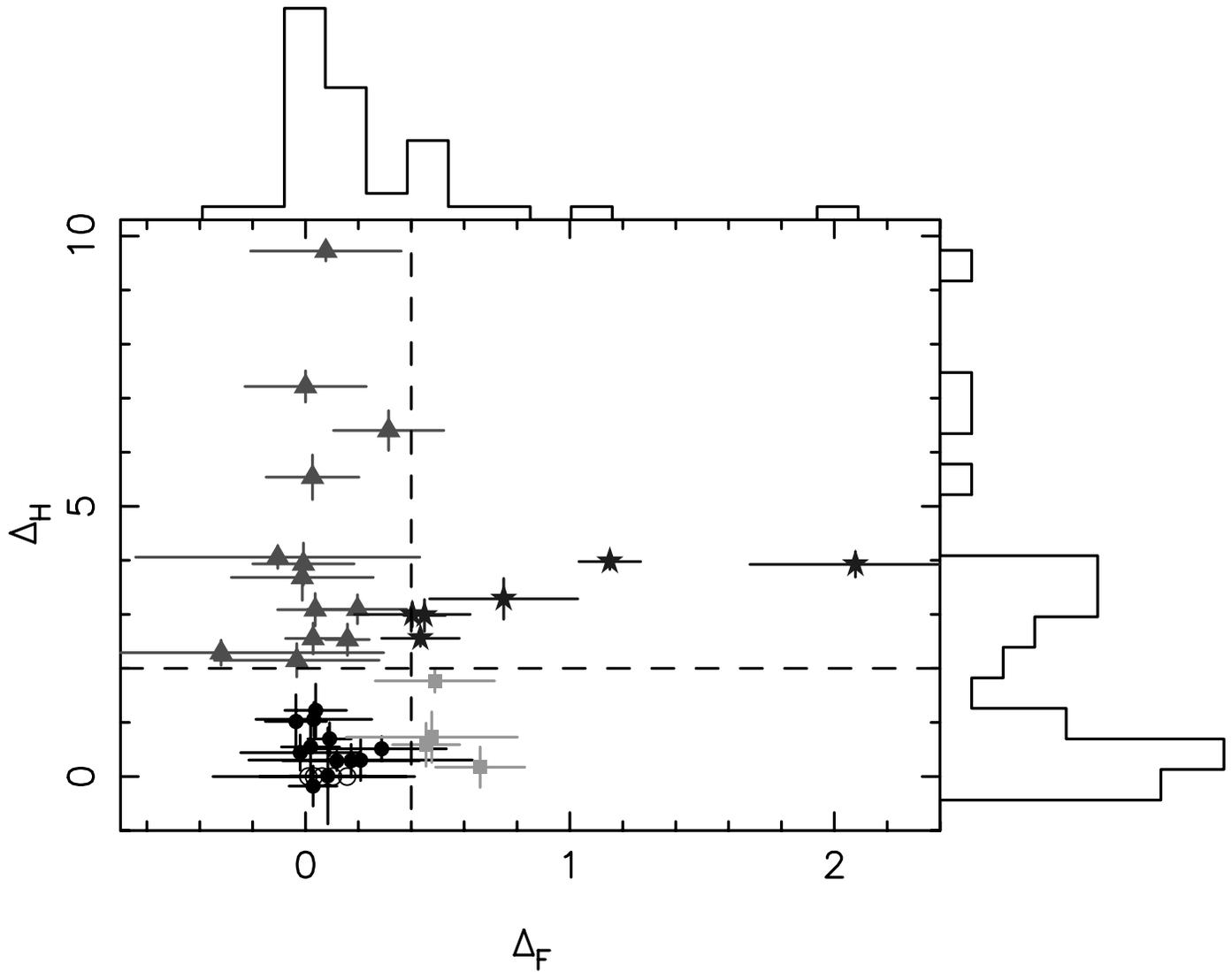


FIG. 10.—Distribution of Δ_F (measure of flaring activity) and Δ_H (measure of size of late hump). The GRBs in each quadrant are shown as filled circles (no significant flares or hump), squares (flares but no hump), stars (flares and hump), and triangles (hump but no flares). The open circles denote GRBs for which there are no data in the light curve with $\tau > 3.5$. [See the electronic edition of the *Journal* for a color version of this figure.]

is a correlation (correlation coefficient 0.53, significant at 99%) between the decay index and the spectral index for all the data plotted, but the relation between $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ and β does not match the high-latitude model prediction, shown by the solid line, and there is clearly very significant scatter. This correlation, and other significant correlations discussed in this paper, are summarized in Table 5.

In principle, the relationship between the temporal decay index and spectral index has two components such that $\alpha = \alpha_\nu\beta + \alpha_f$. The coefficient α_ν arises from the redshift of the peak of the spectral distribution of the synchrotron emission as a function of time, while α_f arises from the temporal decay in the peak flux value of the same spectral distribution. The solid line in Figure 13 shows the expected relationship for the high-latitude model (Kumar & Panaitescu 2000), with $\alpha_\nu = 1$ and $\alpha_f = 2$. The dashed line shows the relationship expected from an afterglow expanding into a constant density interstellar medium (ISM) observed at a frequency below the cooling break ($\nu_x < \nu_c$) and before a jet break, with $\alpha_\nu = 3/2$ and $\alpha_f = 0$ (Sari et al. 1998).

We use this as our afterglow model. If $\nu_x > \nu_c$ then α_ν is unchanged and $\alpha_f = -0.5$; this is plotted as a dot-dashed line in Figure 13. All of the GRBs lie on or above these afterglow lines. We adopt the ISM model, as the light curves for most GRBs appear consistent with the presence of a fairly constant density medium (e.g., Panaitescu & Kumar 2002; Yost et al. 2003; Blustin et al. 2006). Using a wind model would not change the conclusions below.

The best-fit correlation for all the bursts shown in Figure 13 has $\alpha_\nu = 1.8$ and $\alpha_f = 0.53$, which is a poor fit to either model. The best-fit correlation (correlation coefficient 0.66, significant at $\gg 99.9\%$) for those bursts that lie below the high-latitude line is shown as the dotted line. For these objects $\alpha_\nu = 1.3$, close to the average of the high-latitude and afterglow models, but the intercept is $\alpha_f = 0.75$, indicating that the peak flux is not decaying as fast as expected for the high-latitude emission.

Of the five GRBs that lie significantly above the high-latitude prediction in Figure 13, four have the most significant late humps. The other is GRB 050421, for which we have no late data, as it

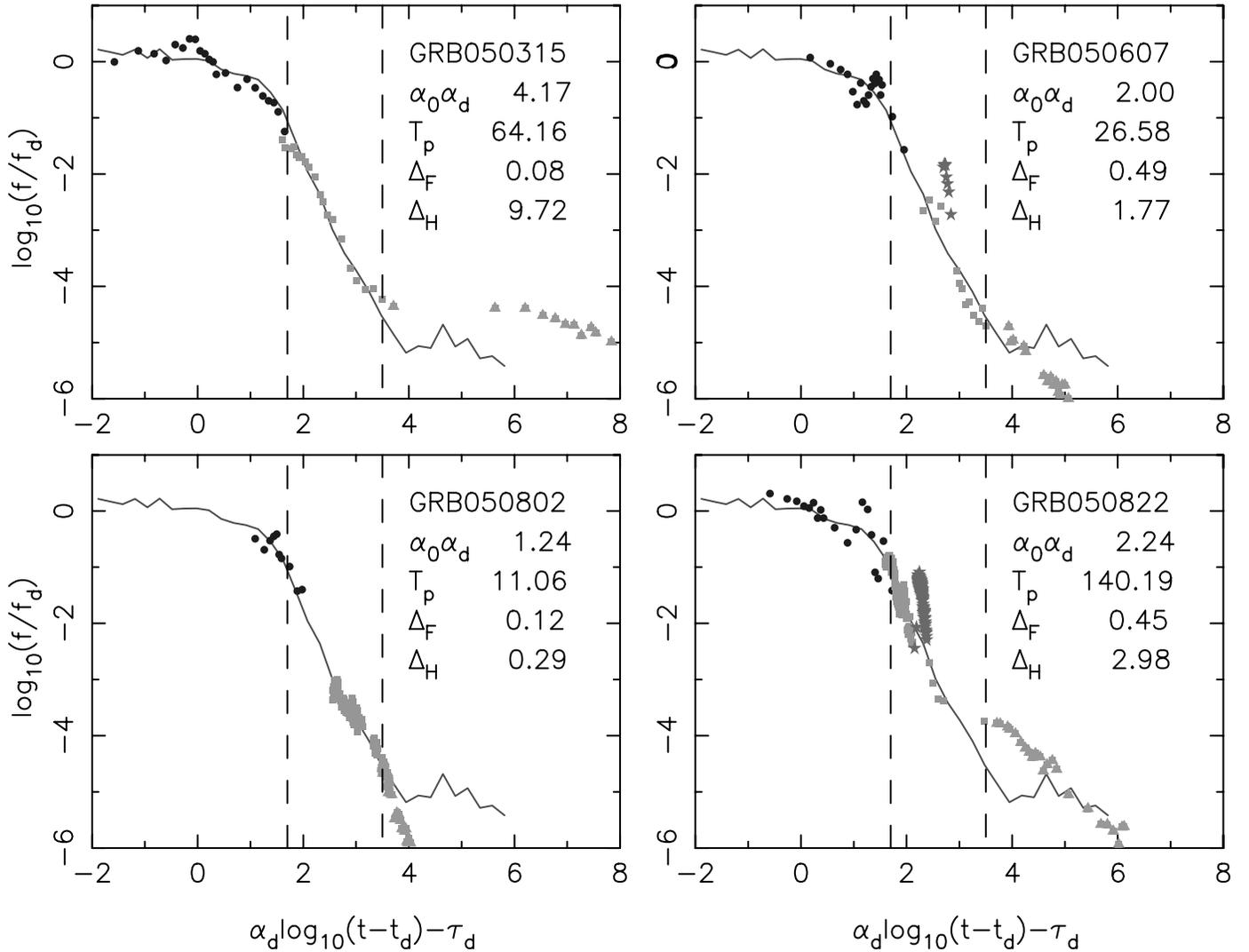


FIG. 11.—Examples of scaled GRB light curves fitted to the average decay curve. *Top left panel*: No flares with prominent late hump. *Top right panel*: Flares with weak late hump. *Bottom left panel*: No flares or late hump. *Bottom right panel*: Prominent flares and moderate late hump. BAT data are circles, and XRT data are squares. Flares and hump are stars and triangles, respectively. The vertical dashed lines are as in Fig. 5. [See the electronic edition of the *Journal* for a color version of this figure.]

quickly faded below detectability (Godet et al. 2006). Aside from GRB 050421, three out of four have $\alpha_0\alpha_d > 3$, which is formally the maximum that the high-latitude model allows (Kumar & Panaitescu 2000). One of these, GRB 050422, has a large late flare in the BAT, which is placed at $(t - t_d)/T_p \approx 0.6$ (see Fig. 8). If this peak is pushed nearer to the temporal origin, then the decay index becomes smaller (≈ 3.2 ; Beardmore et al. 2006), but if we do this the overall fit to the average decay profile is very poor. For the other two, GRB 050315 and GRB 050915A, the most significant peak in the BAT light curve is close to the temporal origin, and the overall fit to the average profile is excellent. The BAT light curve for GRB 050315 is dominated by a single flare, and Vaughan et al. (2006a) gave a similarly high decay index value ($\alpha_1 \sim 5$). The large majority of GRBs lie below the high-latitude prediction. For these, it is likely that we are seeing a combination of high-latitude prompt emission and conventional, prejet-break afterglow.

The lines shown in Figure 13 are just some of a family of curves with the form $\alpha = \alpha_\nu\beta + \alpha_f$, each with a unique intercept α_f and corresponding gradient α_ν . Assuming that the emission from each GRB corresponds to a combination of the high-latitude

and afterglow models shown as the solid and dashed lines (discussed above), we can parameterize each of the GRBs with an intercept $\alpha_f = (\alpha_0\alpha_d - 3\beta/2)/(1 - \beta/4)$, which is given in Table 4. If objects have $\alpha_f \sim 0$ they conform to the prediction of the afterglow model, and if they have $\alpha_f \sim 2$ they conform to the prediction of the high-latitude model. Thus, α_f serves as a measure of the combination of these two components.

We might expect those GRBs that have smaller α_f (more afterglow dominated) to be more likely to have an early optical detection. Using UVOT data to quantify the early optical brightness, the data support such a relationship.¹⁵ Of our sample, 33 GRBs have UVOT observations in the first 10 minutes, of which 11 are detected in V . All of these 11 have $\alpha_f < 0.85$. In contrast, of the 22 GRBs with upper limits (typically $V > 19$), 19 have $\alpha_f > 0.85$. The likelihood of a UVOT detection also correlates with $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ such that GRBs with $\alpha_0\alpha_d < 2$ are 4 times more likely to have been detected.

It is clear from Figure 13 that the decay index, $\alpha_0\alpha_d$, correlates with the strength of flares and humps; i.e., the location of

¹⁵ See http://swift.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/swift/archive/grb_table/.

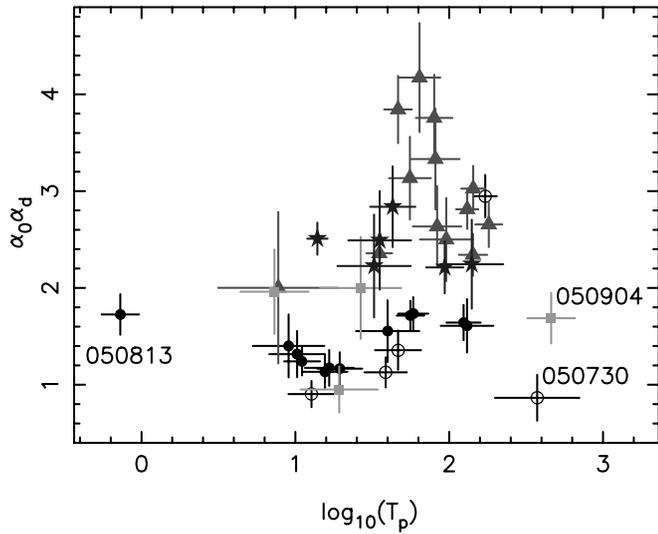


FIG. 12.—Distribution of $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ and $\log_{10}(T_p)$. Symbols are as in Fig. 10. [See the electronic edition of the Journal for a color version of this figure.]

a burst in this figure depends on its location in Figure 10. The bursts with the most significant humps do not have large X-ray flares, but they do have steep decays and straddle the high-latitude line in Figure 13. The bursts with no significant flares or humps all lie below the high-latitude line in the bottom left part of Figure 13. In the context of the ISM afterglow model, for these GRBs the implied electron energy index $p \sim 2$ – 2.5 . For the bursts clustering around $\alpha_0\alpha_d \sim 2.5$ and $\beta \sim 1.5$, which appear close to the afterglow lines in the middle right portion of Figure 13, the implied $p > 3$.

The late hump starts to appear at $\tau_h = 3.5$, which corresponds to a time $T_h = 10^{(\tau_h + \tau_d)/\alpha_d}$. The ratio of the prompt time (T_p) to this hump time is given by $\log_{10}(T_p/T_h) = -1.8/\alpha_d$. We can integrate the light curves to find the fluence for $t > T_h$, E_h , and compare this with the fluence under the average power law for the same time interval, E_{pl} . The ratio E_h/E_{pl} is a measure of the size of the hump with respect to the power law. The bottom left panel of Figure 14 shows the \log_{10} of this ratio as a function of $\log_{10}(T_p/T_h)$. The horizontal dotted line indicates the ratio value for which there is no excess late hump over and above the power-law decay. A simple explanation for the observed correlation is that the weak hump component is always present at a flux level a factor of $\sim 10^4$ below the prompt emission and lasts for $\sim 1000T_p$ s, but it is only detected if the initial decay is fast with $\alpha_0\alpha_d > 1.9$. If the decay from the prompt phase is slow then, by the time the flux has dropped to the appropriate level, the hump component has faded away.

The bottom right panel of Figure 14 shows the \log_{10} of the fluence ratio E_h/E_{pl} plotted versus α_f . There is a significant correlation (coefficient 0.60, significant at $>99.9\%$) between the two, indicating that the late hump is more visible when the decay conforms to the high-latitude model ($\alpha_f \geq 2$), but becomes obscured if an afterglow component dominates.

We can also integrate the light curves for $t < T_p$ to find the fluence of the prompt emission, E_{pr} . The ratio $(E_h - E_{pl})/E_{pr}$ is then a measure of the fluence in the excess late hump relative to the prompt fluence. The top panels of Figure 14 show \log_{10} of this ratio with respect to $\log_{10}(T_p/T_h)$ and α_f . There is no correlation between the fluence in the excess late hump and temporal decay index or the dominance of the high-latitude emission over the afterglow. The GRBs with the largest α_f values (weak

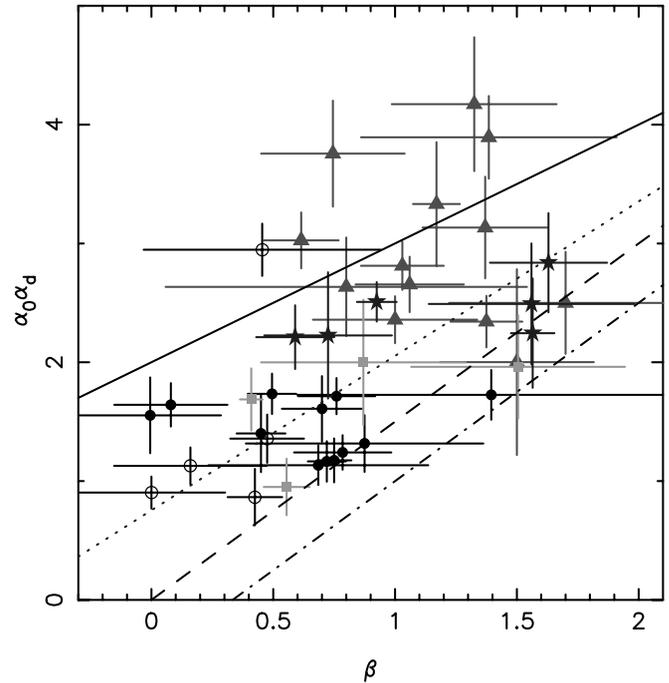


FIG. 13.—Correlation of $\alpha_0\alpha_d$ with β , where β is the average of the spectral indices from the BAT and XRT. Symbols are as in Fig. 10. The solid diagonal line shows the predictions of the high-latitude model. The dashed and dot-dashed diagonal lines show the two afterglow models discussed in the text. The dotted diagonal line shows a fit to those bursts below the high-latitude line. [See the electronic edition of the Journal for a color version of this figure.]

or no afterglow component present) have the highest Δ_H and E_h/E_{pl} values, but not the maximum $(E_h - E_{pl})/E_{pr}$. The fluence in the late hump is not correlated with the presence of afterglow, nor is it correlated with the prompt fluence.

The horizontal dotted line in the top panels of Figure 14 indicates the level at which the late hump fluence is equal to the prompt fluence. It is interesting that the maximum late hump fluence is commensurate with the prompt fluence, suggestive of some kind of equipartition in energy between these emission phases. Previous analyses of the hump have proposed that it is not consistent with an afterglow component, but is consistent with refreshing of the forward shock by either continued activity from the central engine or a range in initial Lorentz factor of the ejecta (Nousek et al. 2006; Zhang et al. 2006). At the end of energy injection (i.e., the end of the hump) there is a break in the decay index, the magnitude of which depends on the injection mechanism (Nousek et al. 2006). After this period the emission is presumably dominated by the afterglow again. Another change in decay index occurs at the jet break. The longest duration humps last almost a day, similar to the timescale on which some jet breaks have been seen (Frail et al. 2001). This raises the possibility that some light-curve breaks described as a jet break may be due to the end of energy injection.

The X-ray flares may also be due to the central engine, particularly where the flare fluence is high (e.g., King et al. 2005). In only two cases—GRB 050502B and GRB 050820A—is there a clear indication that the large, late flare appears to have caused an offset in the later decay (i.e., the flux decays after the flare but does not rejoin the previous decay). We note that Falcone et al. (2006) reached a different conclusion for GRB 050502B using XRT data alone. GRB 050820A is discussed in detail in J. Osborne et al. (2006, in preparation).

TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS

Variables ^a	Spearman Correlation Coefficient	Significance (%)
α_1, β_x	0.30	95
$(\alpha_1 - \beta_x), \alpha_1$	0.89	$\gg 99.9$
$\alpha_0 \alpha_d, \beta$ (entire sample)	0.53	99
$\alpha_0 \alpha_d, \beta$ (GRBs below high-latitude line in Fig. 13)	0.66	$\gg 99.9$
$E_h/E_{pl}, \alpha_f$	0.60	>99.9

^a Defined in text.

The analysis described above has considered just the soft X-ray band, 0.3–10 keV (i.e., the XRT bandpass). We expect the prompt emission to dominate in the hard (BAT) band, 15–150 keV, while the afterglow is predominantly soft X-ray. Figure 15 shows the ratio of the hard (15–150 keV) fluence for $t < T_p$, E_γ , with the soft (0.3–10 keV) decay fluence for $t > T_p$, $R_E = E_\gamma/(E_X - E_{pr})$, where E_X is the total soft fluence and E_{pr} is the prompt fluence, as before. For GRBs with $\alpha_f > 1.75$, $R_E = 2.36 \pm 0.93$, while for $\alpha_f < 0.25$, $R_E = 0.22 \pm 0.13$. Thus, GRBs with smaller α_f have a greater fraction of their energy emitted at $t > T_p$.

For the GRBs with a known redshift, we can use the burst duration, T_p , to estimate the isotropic equivalent gamma-ray energy, E_p (1–300) keV, released in the rest-frame 1–300 keV

band during the prompt phase, $t < T_p$. We have used a rest-frame band similar to that of the BAT to avoid having to extrapolate over a large energy range with a resultant, more uncertain k -correction. We assume a cosmology with $H_0 = 71 \text{ km s}^{-1} \text{ Mpc}^{-1}$, $\Lambda = 0.27$, and $\Omega = 0.73$. These energy estimates are shown in the left panel of Figure 16, plotted against the log of the rest-frame duration of the burst, $\log_{10}[T_p/(1+z)]$. Most bursts cluster in the center with similar durations and luminosities. GRB 050724 and GRB 050803 lie toward the bottom right. GRB 050724 is a short burst with a long soft X-ray tail (Barthelmy et al. 2005b) that causes a large T_p . It has a lower luminosity relative to its duration than the long bursts plotted in Figure 16. A low luminosity for GRB 050724 is consistent with other short bursts (Fox et al.

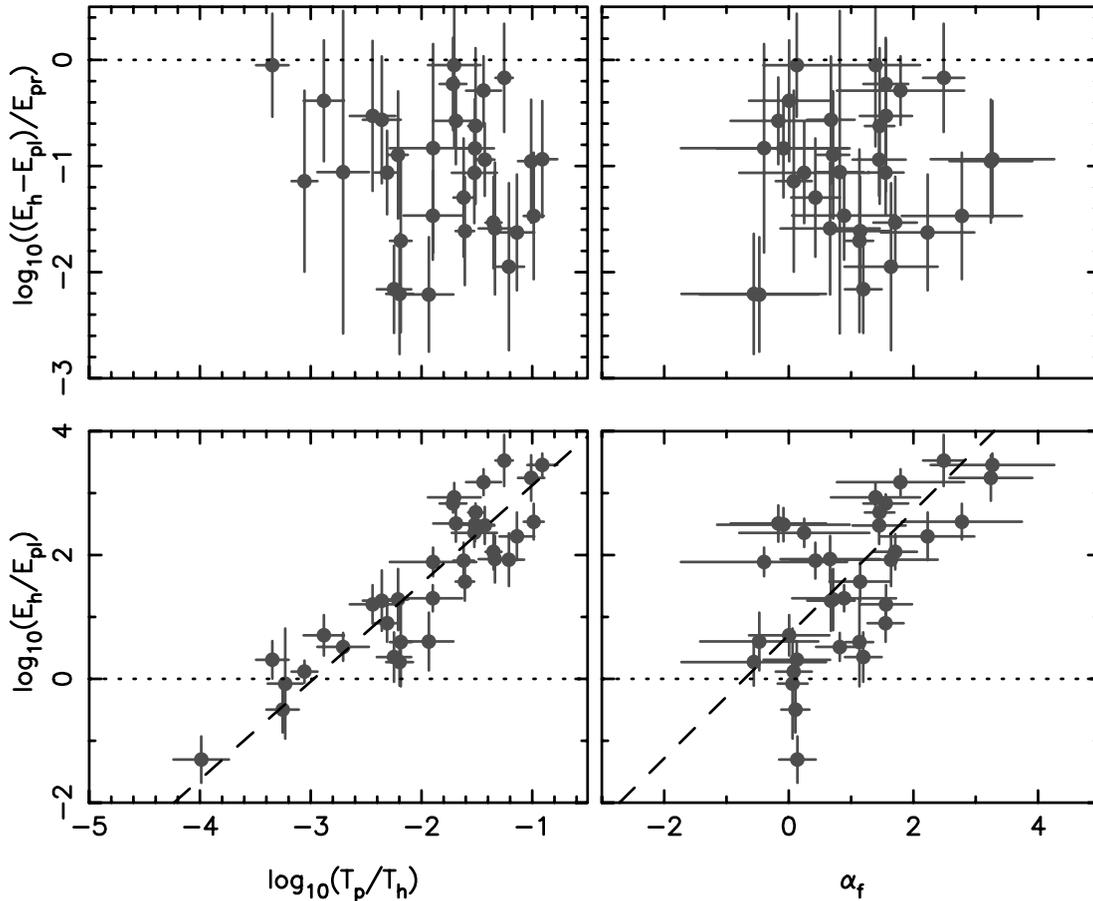


FIG. 14.—*Bottom panels:* The ratio of the size of the late hump emission to the power law, E_h/E_{pl} , compared with T_p/T_h and α_f . The horizontal dotted line corresponds to equal fluence in both. *Top panels:* The ratio of the fluence in the late hump emission to that of the prompt, $(E_h - E_{pl})/E_{pr}$, compared with T_p/T_h and α_f . The horizontal dotted line corresponds to equal fluence in both. [See the electronic edition of the Journal for a color version of this figure.]

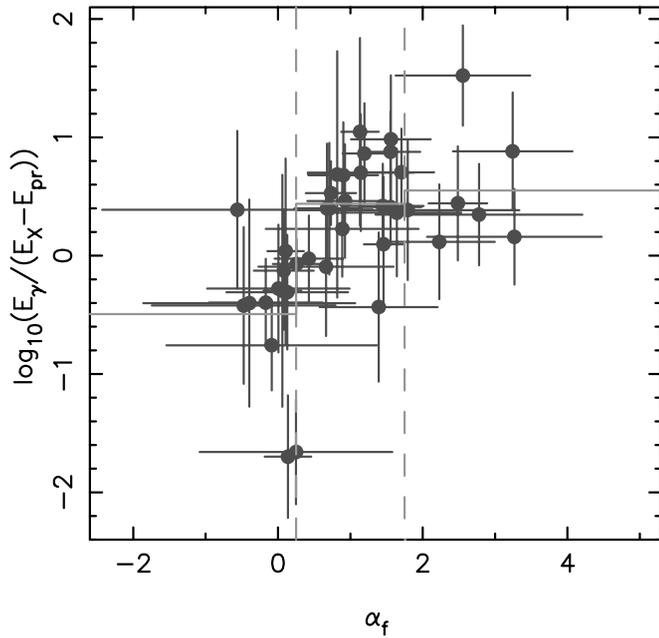


FIG. 15.—Comparison of the hard prompt fluence, E_γ (15–150 keV) for $t < T_p$, with the soft X-ray decay fluence, $E_X - E_{pr}$ (0.3–10 keV) for $t > T_p$. The vertical dashed lines correspond to $\alpha_f = 0.25$ and 1.75 , respectively (see text). [See the electronic edition of the Journal for a color version of this figure.]

2005). GRB 050803 has an uncertain redshift, as no clear optical transient was found. The redshift used here ($z = 0.422$) is that of a star-forming galaxy in the XRT error box (Bloom et al. 2005). Either the redshift is underestimated or this is also an underluminous burst.

The derived luminosity clearly depends on both the duration and the bandpass over which the original fluence (to be converted into luminosity) is obtained. To illustrate this, we also show in Figure 16 the isotropic equivalent gamma-ray energy,

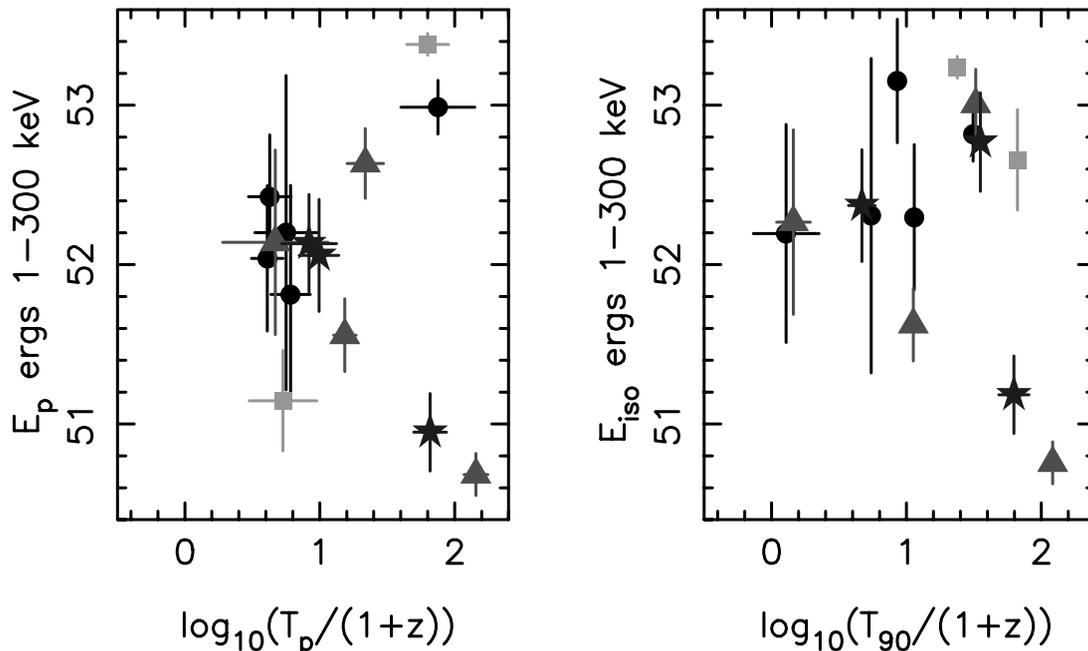


FIG. 16.—Left: Isotropic equivalent energy in the hard prompt emission, E_p (1–300 keV) for $t < T_p$, calculated for those bursts for which we have a redshift. Right: Corresponding isotropic equivalent energy in the 1–300 keV band derived over T_{90} . Symbols are as in Fig. 10. [See the electronic edition of the Journal for a color version of this figure.]

E_{iso} (1–300) keV, released in the rest-frame 1–300 keV band during T_{90} .

9. CONCLUSIONS

We have analyzed data for the 40 GRBs observed by *Swift* prior to 2005 October 1, for which XRT observations began within 10 minutes of the BAT trigger. We have combined data from the BAT and the XRT to investigate the form of the X-ray emission (0.3–10 keV) during the first few hours following the burst.

The initial XRT spectral index is slightly steeper than that seen in the BAT, showing that spectral evolution occurs as the GRB ages. Combining the BAT and XRT data, the raw light curves show that the initial X-ray emission seen in the XRT is consistent with being a continuation of the emission seen by the BAT. Some two-thirds of the GRBs display a light curve that shows a steeply declining component that breaks to a shallower decay rate—the late emission hump—usually within an hour of the trigger. The remaining bursts decline fairly continuously. At least half of the GRBs in the sample display late X-ray flares, probably due to continued central engine activity, but in only a few GRBs does the fluence in the flares rival that of the burst.

To investigate the early X-ray emission, we used an automatic fitting procedure to align the light curves. Allowing for flares, this procedure works well for the entire sample. The resultant light curves display a prompt phase, mostly observed by the BAT, followed by a decline. The light curve can be described by an exponential that relaxes into a power law whose decay rate varies considerably from burst to burst. The transition time between the exponential and power law provides a well-determined measure of the burst duration.

Comparing the temporal and spectral indices of the power-law decline, the distribution is consistent with a simple model in which the early emission is a combination of emission from the central engine (parameterized by high-latitude emission; Kumar

& Panaitescu 2000) and afterglow. Those GRBs in which the afterglow is weak early on decay fast during the power-law phase, and their X-ray light curves are consistent with the high-latitude model. Some are dominated by afterglow, while the majority require a significant contribution from both components. The likelihood of an early optical detection strongly correlates with the strength of the X-ray afterglow component.

The late emission hump component may be present in all objects but can be masked by a strong afterglow component. The late hump can last for many tens of thousands of s and may also be due to continued central engine activity (Nousek et al. 2006; Zhang et al. 2006). It is interesting that the strongest humps seen have a total fluence that matches that of the prompt phase. There

appears to be a correlation such that bursts with the most visible humps do not have strong, late X-ray flares.

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