

Monte Carlo Constraint of Luminosity Evolution and Redshift of Far-Infrared Galaxy Surveys

Noah Kurinsky and Anna Sajina

Tufts University

Department of Physics and Astronomy

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Abstract

To be written, updated form

1 Introduction

In the field of observational astrophysics, a great deal of time is put into characterizing various properties of surveys of galactic populations both large and small. The vast majority of these efforts focus on an analysis specific to the survey, instrumentation, and source type being studied, and each requires new computer code and months of work to produce a publishable result. The necessity of such a time commitment makes maximizing the scientific yield of such analyses a top priority. Recent attempts have been made to characterize the properties of galaxy populations by using very general spectral features (e.g. spectral color) to fit complex evolutionary models (e.g. redshift-luminosity evolution, as in Marsden et al., 2011). A discussion of such methods, as well as their successes and failures, can also be found in the previous reference.

We extend the ideas presented in Marsden et al. (2011) from one spectral color to two; whereas they attempt to fit their model using the single 60-100 μm color, we instead employ a two color model, using three spectral bands, to create a two-dimensional diagnostic spectral color density plot of an observed population. We then employ a library of luminous and ultra-luminous infrared galaxy (LIRG and ULIRG) spectral energy distribution (SED) models to try to reproduce the observed trend, exploring the parameter space to constrain the redshift evolution of the far-infrared luminosity function. Using the luminosity function as a general prescription for number density and luminosity of galaxies at a given redshift, we can use the constrained parameters to simulate a high-redshift survey, given characteristics of the instrument performing the survey.

Our novel approach allows us to characterize the sample under examination as well as highlight the successes and failure of the SED template and the luminosity function form used by the fitting procedure. In addition, a large emphasis has been put on ensuring that the fitting program is highly generalizable; the models are stored externally to the main program in FITS

format, and the luminosity function and various other procedures are highly modularized in the C++ code. Due to these features, the templates desired by the user can be specified at runtime, and the luminosity function can be easily modified. The program is not band or instrument specific, and the user can specify the exact survey characteristics (such as magnitude limits and statistical noise levels) to achieve the best fit possible. Such considerations allow us to address the need for reusable code, with the intent being that the analysis of data sets of this nature can be done much quicker, and result in a larger, richer science yield. In addition, we see high dependence of survey outcome on instrumental properties, and thus ability to tweak such characteristics has a large impact on the success or failure of fitting attempts.

The above is a very general description of the product we detail in this paper. We begin by discussing the assumptions made by the current form of the fitting procedure, such as luminosity functional form as well as the form of the redshift and model distributions. We then discuss the mathematical methods employed to randomize the simulation, perform the fitting, and generate the fitting statistic. We then present the results of testing the program with two far-infrared data samples of the GOODS-North field obtained by BLAST (Pascale et al., 2008) and the Spitzer FLS field obtained by the HerMES survey (Smith et al., 2012), using Herschel's SPIRE instrument (Pilbratt et al., 2010; Griffin et al., 2010). These data sets measure identical bands, but differ in sensitivity, sample size, sky coverage, and other minor respects. We finally lay out the improvements that we plan to implement in the near future, and our eventual goals pertaining to public release and long-term usability for the project.

2 Simulating Galactic Populations

To produce a simulated galaxy population suitable for comparison to an observed population (given the analyses described

later in this paper), three flux densities corresponding to three distinct bands of observation need to be produced, in numbers which reduce statistical error to an experimentally acceptable level. The models employed must be able to reproduce characteristics of a wide range of galaxies, thus a set of models must be chosen that can generally describe any galaxy. In the far-infrared regime of the electromagnetic spectrum, the vast majority of radiation from galaxies is dust-reprocessed thermal radiation, and thus the emissions from these galaxies can be characterized by a blackbody, or more accurately, a modified blackbody (see Section 2.1). Choosing a model derived from physical formulae, as opposed to an empirical model, allows our eventual fits to speak more to the physical characteristics of the galaxy population, which in turn allows us to eventually infer star-formation rates as well as some other basic properties simply from the combination of temperature and luminosity.

Following the above reasoning, the first step in the simulation process is to generate a template of spectral energy distributions (SEDs) of the galaxies, from which flux densities can be pulled and to which parameter distributions can be ascribed. At first glance, it would seem as though such a library alone would be adequate for the simulation purposes, however observational surveys aren't perfect data products, and thus additional corrections must be made for factors such as statistical noise characteristic of the detector in use as well as the magnitude limit of the sample. In order to correct for these and other factors, it is necessary to adopt a luminosity function, with the added ability to randomly produce luminosities for sources in accordance with their likelihood as prescribed by the function. Additionally, a luminosity distance calculator is necessary, to convert luminosities into flux densities that can be used to normalize a given SED, such that noise can be added in a realistic manner to the template. The functional form of these and other components of the simulation, as well as details of their implementation, are described later in this section.

To be able to test the accuracy of the model against observation, a diagnostic needs to be chosen which can capture as many aspects of the sample as possible. Single fluxes have little meaning, as they vary with luminosity and distance, however, the trend over the entire simulated regime is luminosity independent, and provides a means by which to identify different sub-groups of similar sources. We choose to use the spectral color (defined as $S_\nu \propto \nu^\alpha$) to characterize each source, and produce a two-dimensional histogram of the entire population from these colors to describe the cumulative properties of the sample. The construction of this histogram and the method of comparison are described later in this section.

Even though the following sections describe specific implementations of the various aspects of the fitting program, it is important to note that many of these specific forms are only those adopted for our far-infrared fitting and modeling methods. The program has been designed and implemented to work with arbitrary models, and none of the specific details discussed below are actually present in the compiled executable, but are read in from files and are fully changeable. The luminosity function may, in the future, operate in a similar way;

currently it is hard-coded. The overall design of the program is to strive for as few specific assumptions as possible. With this consideration in mind, we move on to discuss the specific assumptions made for the early version of this program.

2.1 SED Library

In the previous version of this program, we employed a two-dimensional model comprised of modified blackbodies of various temperatures and radio strengths, without assigning them intrinsic luminosities. This served to model the very general properties of high-redshift, actively star forming galaxies, however more detailed models exist, and using such models enhances the robustness of our analysis. In this iteration of the program, we chose to adopt a library of SED templates from Rieke et al. (2009), who construct a set of templates from a combination of local observations and radiative transfer arguments. These templates, seen in figure 1, have associated intrinsic luminosities, due to their adaptation from real local galaxies, and range in far-infrared luminosity from $10^9 - 10^{13} L_{sun}$. A closer view of our specific region of interest, with the brightest and faintest SEDs at redshifts between $z \sim 0 - 5$, can be seen in figure 2.

These templates are mainly based on spectra obtained from a handful of local IRAS galaxies selected for having high star formation rates, which leads to a question of whether they remain valid models at high redshift. Rieke et al. (2009) discuss model validity up to redshifts around $z \sim 2.5$, and conclude that their models can be considered fairly accurate for mid-infrared analyses, although they suggest that some boosting due to AGN should be added. It has also been suggested¹ that, due to the intrinsically larger nature of high-redshift galaxies, the intrinsic luminosities should also be evolved with redshift to a certain extent. As we will mention in the initial results (section 5), we do see a failure of models at high redshift to reproduce observation, which suggests that these models may need one of the suggested modifications. We are currently working on a much more robust template in parallel with this effort, which incorporates such color evolution with redshift.

The design of this program allows for consideration of model accuracy, and thus it might be best in future iterations to use a more robust library of models which has built in redshift evolution. We plan to re-adopt features for this program which allow for multiple models to be associated with the same intrinsic luminosity. There is a possibility that the user would specify in what proportion each model would be sampled in a given redshift regime, however it seems more likely that the program would add such considerations into its fitting efforts, and produce as output how successful various weightings are at reproducing observations.

As noted in a previous version of this paper, and in Wilkin (2003) (who employed modified blackbodies to constrain redshift far-infrared galaxies), the introduction of such considerations leads to a large amount of degeneracy, and for this iteration of the program our main concern was to implement the Monte Carlo fitting routine, thus we chose a simpler model

¹ by Professor Danilo Marchesini, Tufts University

template. Future versions will undoubtedly see a change, however as models are user specified, single luminosity models may be used and preferred depending on use cases.

2.2 Luminosity Function

By far the most important component of the program, the luminosity function determines the number and luminosity of generated sources for a given redshift, which we modify by altering the manner in which the luminosity function evolves with redshift. This approach replaces the previous approach of using the luminosity function only to assign luminosities, and randomly selecting models and redshift distributions; now, the luminosity function determines all of these factors for us. For this version of the program we employ an IRAS-type double power-law luminosity function from Negrello et al. (2013):

$$\frac{dN}{dV d\log L}(L|L^*, \Phi^*, \alpha, \beta, z) = \Phi^*(z) * \left[\left(\frac{L}{L^*(z)} \right)^\alpha + \left(\frac{L}{L^*(z)} \right)^\beta \right]^{-1}$$

where Φ^* and L^* are evolved with redshift as described in Caputi et al. (2007):

$$\Phi^*(z) = \Phi_0^*(1+z)^p \quad L^*(z) = L_0^*(1+z)^q$$

The default values for α, β, Φ_0^* , and L_0^* for 350 μm were taken from Negrello et al. (2013), and for this iteration are considered fixed values, as the luminosity function is well constrained at low redshift. The default values for p and q were taken from Caputi et al. (2007) for redshift evolution out to $z \approx 2$; the values we choose are those consistent with the low-redshift evolution from that paper. These values only serve as defaults, and can be altered via the interactive interface, as will be discussed below. For the current form of the program, we assume no evolution after redshift of ~ 2 , as is generally accepted due to analyses such as that presented in Marsden et al. (2011). I will discuss how this translates to simulated source numbers in section 2.5.

2.3 Cosmology

As we are simulating galactic populations spanning a large chunk of the observable universe, correct calculation of distance and volume as a function of redshift, as well as correct compensation for redshift effects, is vital to the accuracy of our effort. Specifically, we need to calculate luminosity distance, co-moving volume, and correctly apply K-corrections when calculating observed flux values. I describe the formulae we apply in this section, and discuss various approximations and special considerations. We adopt the cosmology from WMAP ($\Omega_\Lambda = 0.728, \Omega_M = 0.272, \Omega_k = 0, H_0 = 70.4$) for our default values (Komatsu et al., 2011).

2.3.1 Luminosity Distance

In order to convert luminosity and redshift into a flux, as well as determine the detectability of a source given the magnitude limit of a sample, the program needs to be able to compute

luminosity distance. We decided to assume a flat universe (as evidenced above by $\Omega_k = 0$), however all other cosmological parameters are left free, so that future users can adjust them as more accurate measurements are made. Our one assumption allows for the code to be faster and more efficient, and as it is commonly believed that our universe has no curvature, it should not affect the long-term value of this program.

Luminosity distance is computed by the standard formula:

$$d_L(z) = \frac{(1+z)c}{H_0} \int_0^z \frac{dz'}{\sqrt{(1+z')^3 \Omega_M + \Omega_\Lambda}}$$

We compute this using numerical integration in redshift steps of $z = 0.001$ to maximize precision while allowing for real-time luminosity distance calculations. Future program versions will most likely see an interpolation based calculator, in order to increase performance, as every simulated flux currently requires a 1000 cycle integration operation.

2.3.2 Comoving Volume

In order to convert the luminosity function into a source number, we also need to compute the comoving volume for a given redshift bin. For the case of a flat universe, the co-moving volume per solid angle between z_{min} and z_{max} is:

$$\frac{dV_C}{d\Omega} = \int_{z_{min}}^{z_{max}} \left(\frac{dV_C}{dz d\Omega} \right) dz \approx \left(\frac{dV_C}{dz d\Omega} \right) \Delta z$$

for small Δz , where

$$\frac{dV_C}{dz d\Omega} = \frac{c [d_L(z)]^2}{H_0(1+z)^2 \sqrt{\Omega_M(1+z)^3 + \Omega_\Lambda}}$$

Here, all parameters are as defined for the luminosity distance calculation. Multiplication of $dV_C/d\Omega$ by the solid angle gives the total co-moving volume between the redshift bounds.

2.3.3 K Corrections

Due to observation in a fixed bandpass, and a red-shifting of the emission from the galaxy into the bandpass ($\nu_e = [1+z]\nu_o$), we need to correct for the varying size of the bandpass by multiplying the expected flux by an additional factor of $(1+z)$:

$$f_\nu(\nu_o) = \frac{(1+z)}{4\pi d_L^2} L_\nu(\nu_e)$$

See Hogg et al. (2002) for a more involved derivation and discussion.

2.4 Observational Considerations

In addition to simulating the theoretical SEDs produced by galaxies, a thorough fit of model to observation must take into account certain properties of the survey being analyzed. In the current version of the fitting program, random Gaussian

noise representative of the average flux error is added independently to each simulated band after normalization by the luminosity function to simulate error due to unforeseen factors, mainly thermal noise in the case of our far-infrared bolometers. In addition, the magnitude limit is taken into consideration, and sources whose flux in any band falls below the detection threshold of the instrumentation are excluded from all analyses, although the number of “undetectable” sources produced by various parameter combinations is recorded, so that in the future it may be used somehow to improve the quality of the fit, or as an indication of the completeness of the survey.

Additionally, many surveys conducted to probe out to high-redshift are conducted in extremely dark areas of the sky, and are thus designed to minimize contamination by low-redshift sources. This leads to a dearth of low-redshift sources in the observation, which we account for in the simulation by setting the minimum redshift considered to a non-zero value. If not done, all simulations will be dominated by low redshift sources. This is user defined, however, and depending on the survey, different minimum redshifts may be employed to better reproduce the sample under consideration.

For the tests discussed in Section 5, the noise level was the experimentally found mean of the flux errors provided with the survey data, calculated separately for each band, and the flux limits were taken to be the minimum fluxes found in each band. We also assume a minimum redshift of $z \sim 0.1$, which is reasonable considering the depth of the field observed.

2.5 Generating a Survey from SEDs and a Luminosity Function

Our main goal is to attempt to recreate an observation with the basic assumptions that we have a prescriptive luminosity function, full set of SED templates, and correct characterization of the basic properties of our instrument. Imagining the simulation space as a two-dimensional space in luminosity and redshift, we break the space down into bins of z versus $\log(L_{fir})$. Assuming the intrinsic luminosities of the templates are equally spaced in log space (as they are in our case), they naturally break themselves into equal bins in the luminosity direction. We additionally break the redshift range into equal bins, with variable size specified by the user. The finite redshift bin sizes ensure that when we calculate source numbers, we get a large number of bins with non-zero integer source numbers.

For each bin, we calculate the number of sources to simulate using the formula

$$N = \Omega \int_{z_{min}}^{z_{max}} \int_{L_{min}}^{L_{max}} \frac{dV_c}{dz d\Omega}(z) \frac{dN}{dV_c d\log L}(L, p, q, z) d\log(L) dz$$

where the terms are as defined in the previous sections, and we assume that the parameters Φ_0^* , L_0^* , α and β are assumed to be fixed and determined at the start of run time. With our moderately sized bins, we approximate this as:

$$N \approx \Omega \frac{dV_c}{dz d\Omega}(z_{avg}) \frac{dN}{dV_c d\log L}(L_{avg}, p, q, z_{avg}) \Delta \log(L) \Delta z$$

We make this approximation for a few reasons. Firstly, we have no choice but to split the luminosity into bins, as we have binned SED models; they are already skewed towards the central luminosity, so it makes the most sense to find the prevalence of this luminosity and generate sources for luminosities surrounding it in equal proportions.

We choose not to integrate in redshift due mainly to the computation expense; for every calculation of an infinitesimal co-moving volume element, we need to integrate to obtain luminosity distance for that redshift, and if we were to integrate over this element, we would be creating multiple large nested loops, increasing program runtime by orders of magnitude, without gaining appreciable precision. For these reasons, assuming the bins are small enough, we make this approximation without loss of generality and accuracy. Again, see Negrello et al. (2013) for an in depth discussion of this model.

With a two-dimensional integer populated space, we can begin to construct the simulated survey. For each redshift/luminosity bin, we perform the following sequence of steps:

1. Compute wavelength at which observed radiation would be emitted (according to $\lambda_{emit} = (1 + z)^{-1} \lambda_{obs}$)
2. Extract the luminosity per unit wavelength at these wavelengths from the model with the luminosity associated with the given bin
3. Compute the k-corrected flux density at the given redshift
4. Simulate random instrumental noise for each flux based on the specified noise parameters
5. Check that the source is above the detection threshold of the simulated instrument in all three bands
6. If detected, add to overall source array

This process is repeated the number of times indicated by the integer value in that redshift/luminosity bin, with the first step only completed once per redshift bin, and the second once per luminosity bin.

In this manner, we are able to generate simulated surveys containing lists of three matched flux densities with standard errors and minimums matching those seen for the real survey; thus we isolate variation such that it exists only in source number, luminosity distribution, and redshift distribution, which we mainly control in this iteration through the manipulation of the luminosity function redshift evolution.

3 Fitting Methodology

The simulated and observed galactic populations are compared on the basis of their spectral color distributions, as discussed in the introduction. In order to produce a statistic indicative of goodness of fit, a diagnostic plot which can characterize an entire population based on the spectral colors of the sources

is needed, in order to produce a space within which the statistic can be run. For our fitting program, we employ a two-dimensional color histogram, of which each axis is a distinct spectral color. This is discussed in further detail in Section 3.1.

The fitting statistic used to compare observation and simulation is a χ^2 statistic, computed as described in Section 3.2. The fitting is performed by systematically varying the parameters of the various distributions in an attempt to minimize the chi-square error. For the current version of the fitting program, this is a somewhat involved process, as the model parameters are currently fixed and must be altered by the user to find the parameter distributions which produce the best fit. This process will be described in more detail as an example of the fitting is described in Section 5.

3.1 Two-Dimensional Spectral Color Histogram

As with all fitting programs, one of the most important choices made in the design process is choosing the way in which to compile the data such that a fitting statistic can be run on it. Most programs tend towards one dimensional data representations, as these are much easier to handle. Due to the nature of our models and of sources in this particular regime of the electromagnetic spectrum, we decided on a two-dimensional color density metric. This data representation allows us to clearly identify multiple populations where present, as well as trends at both sides of the range of interest.

The diagnostic produced from the simulated data is a two dimensional histogram, with the $250\mu\text{m}/500\mu\text{m}$ color as the x axis and the $350\mu\text{m}/500\mu\text{m}$ color as the y axis. An example of this diagnostic for a real dataset can be seen in Figure 5. There are in fact three unique color pairs that can be produced from fluxes in three distinct bands. This combination was chosen because the $500\mu\text{m}$ flux has a larger statistical error than the other two bands. This combination ensures that sources with largely erroneous $500\mu\text{m}$ fluxes will still exhibit the same general trend, but lie either lower or higher on the trend than they should be. This is not important for fitting purposes, as we add in simulated noise at comparable levels to that present in observation. It does allow for better identification of potential multiple populations by eye within a given sample and minimizes the visual noise obscuration such that overall trends are minimally disturbed.

3.2 Chi-Square Testing

The major hurdle to working with higher dimensional metrics like this is the over abundance of zero values. Higher dimensional spaces tend to become largely empty as data sets become smaller, thus making the traditional goodness of fit methods harder to implement, as many behave poorly at small values and are undefined at 0. To help counteract this problem, we employ the binsize selection method outline in Scott (1979), where the ideal bin size for a sample of size N with

standard deviation σ is:

$$\Delta\alpha = \frac{3.49\sigma}{\sqrt[3]{N}}$$

This formula was experimentally found by Scott (1979) to best balance the need to minimize whitespace and statistical error while maintaining as much resolution as possible.

The goodness of fit statistic we employ is the popular χ^2 statistic, although a few minor alterations needed to be made to the general formula to obtain a statistic useful for our particular diagnostic, as well as to eliminate the "0" problem which plagues the traditional formula. To begin with, we assign the histogram bins standard Poisson errors ². Starting from the generalized chi-square formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{\sigma_i^2}$$

we get our fitting statistic by setting bin error to

$$\sigma_i = \sqrt{\sigma_{E_i}^2 + \sigma_{O_i}^2} = \sqrt{E_i + O_i}$$

The chi-square error is defined so long as one of the two diagnostics has a non-zero value. For zero values, the results are in agreement, so the formula is overridden and that particular bin is assigned a χ^2 value of zero. The resulting piecewise χ^2 formula then becomes:

$$\chi^2 = \begin{cases} \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i + O_i}, & O_i > 0 \text{ or } E_i > 0 \\ 0, & E_i = O_i = 0 \end{cases}$$

This approach ensures that for any given comparison, there exists a χ^2 value, and gives more weight to areas of higher density, as they have lower comparable error to those bins with only a few sources.

3.3 Markov Chain Monte Carlo Minimization

[to be written]

4 Implementation

The software tool consists of two distinct parts, created to work in tandem to read in data, perform a fitting pass, and display the best fit model. The top-level interface and graphing utilities were programmed in IDL, a high-level interactive programming language uniquely suited for astronomical applications, creation of interactive widgets, and graphing. The actual fitting was performed by a program written in C++, a lower-level language better suited to implementing computationally complex tasks which require the ability to enhance programming efficiency.

²We currently employ the approximate form ($\sigma_i = \sqrt{N_i}$), but in subsequent versions will correct this to precise poisson error.

4.1 C++ Executable

As described above, the C++ portion of the program performs the fitting of the data. It takes two Flexible Image Transport System (FITS)³ files as input, one for observation and the other for models and parameters. The program produces a third file as output, containing the best fit parameter distributions as well as the model, observation, and comparison histograms. The majority of the input and output operations are performed by the CCFits library⁴ procedures. Our program mainly provided C++ wrappers where necessary to organize data into structures compatible with CCFits routines or to decode data extracted from files.

For the more complicated mathematical operations, such as interpolation, random number generation, integration, or minimization, various GNU Scientific Library (GSL)⁵ functions are employed to maximize efficiency and take advantage of the superb algorithms provided with the package. The specific functions used for each of these four operations by various classes are described below:

Random Number Generation All functions which generate random numbers are based off of the procedures and algorithms outlined in Chapter 18 of Galassi et al. (2011). These procedures instantiate a generator from a chosen algorithm and provide the interface by which to get uniformly distributed random variates. For this program, the default algorithm (GSL_RNG_MT19937) is employed. Documentation and further description of this algorithm can be found in the above citation. The random number generator is seeded with a random variate produced by the C++ function `SRAND`, which is in turn seeded with the current time and date. It should be noted that this seeding procedure is temporary and will be revised in future versions of this program.

A method for generating Gaussian random number distributions as well as a method to generate random numbers with an arbitrary probability distribution are also used, taken from Chapter 20 of Galassi et al. (2011). C++ wrapper functions were written for these GSL procedures so that custom ranges, means, and standard deviations could be applied when applicable, and so that large arrays of random deviates could be generated ahead of simulation.

Numerical Integration Numerical integration is performed while calculating luminosity distance, and is either computed by the GSL QNG non-adaptive Gauss-Kronrod integration function and related procedures, outlined in Chapter 17 of

Galassi et al. (2011), or simply by a summation over the integrand implemented as a for loop.

Interpolation Interpolation is necessary for many aspects of the simulation and is used heavily by multiple classes. Both linear (`GSL_INTERP_LINEAR`) and cubic spline (`GSL_INTERP_CSPLINE`) interpolation methods are used in the program, and are described in more detail in Chapter 27 of Galassi et al. (2011). The library provides methods that store the values for interpolation as well as those which require them to be passed in for every evaluation. These were both used, the prior when many interpolations were to be done and memory to be conserved, the latter when speed was desired and only a few interpolations would be performed on any given data set. Similar consideration led to the choice between linear and cubic spline interpolation.

4.1.1 Classes and Other Methods

Each distinct part of the simulation is given its own class and dedicated methods, both in good practice and to further the modular, generalized nature of the program. The classes are arranged in a hierarchy to maximize efficiency and allow for proper object oriented programming convention.

The “simulator” class manages the “SED library” class, “model library” class, and the “histogram” and “observation” classes. It also communicates with the “luminosity function” class. The simulator class returns χ^2 values for the simulation obtained from the parameter values it is given. The top level “main” procedure manages the luminosity function and simulator classes, and performs the Monte Carlo simulation of the model. It also calls the various functions responsible for saving best fit output when simulation is complete is found. Specific implementation details for each class are discussed below.

Model Library Class The model library class reads the provided model templates from a FITS file and stores them in a one dimensional array, indexed in relation to its parameter values. The library compensates for the finite number of models by allowing for cubic spline interpolation between them for any band and luminosity combination, provided that the model ids, bands, and redshifts are all within allowable ranges. The three model flux values used for interpolation are produced by finding three models that bracket the arbitrary model desired and extracting fluxes corresponding the band requested, red-shifted appropriately. Bands are extracted from individual models by spline interpolation as well, thus providing the illusion from outside the class that any arbitrary parameter/band combination is contained within. The finer the resolution provided in the model template fed to the program, however, the lower the errors due to interpolation will be.

Cosmological Functions The functions which compute both luminosity distance and co-moving volume are contained within the “cosmo.h” header file. These are public functions and are not strictly associated with any class; the choice to

³A file format commonly used to store and transport astronomical data, more compact and efficient than text files

⁴CCFits (Gordon et al., 2011) is an open source C++ library designed to facilitate the development of programs utilizing FITS files in C++. It is largely an extension of the older CFITSIO (Pence et al., 2003) package, originally designed for the C programming language. The CFITSIO package provides a more object-oriented, higher level interface for the old-library’s routines.

⁵The GNU Scientific Library (GSL, Galassi et al., 2011) is a compilation of C++ procedures for use in scientific programs, designed to provide well documented, well tested, and highly efficient methods for performing mathematical operations as well as carrying out higher level analyses.

dissociated them from the luminosity function was in recognition that the luminosity function is highly variable, whereas luminosity distance and co-moving volume are standard computations unlikely to change a great deal aside from parameter values. The default values for the various parameters are set in the header file “constants.h”.

In previous versions of the program, the luminosity distance was pre-computed for a large array of finely spaced redshifts, in order to decrease program run-time. In this iteration, this elegant solution was lost during restructuring of the program; a similar approach will be implemented in the future, with consideration given as to how initialization should occur due to the non-class nature of the function. A similar approach may also be taken for co-moving distance.

Luminosity Function Class The Luminosity Function Class is responsible for providing the normalization factor for simulated SEDs. It first initializes luminosity functions evolved to each redshift in the allowable range in increments of $z = 0.1$, and then instantiates a random number generator for each redshift, using the corresponding luminosity function as a probability distribution. The luminosity functions are set so that the lower luminosity range stops at the flux corresponding to the detection limit for the given redshift. When a flux density for a given redshift is requested, the function generates a random luminosity, and computes the k-corrected flux for that redshift.

Observation Library Class The observation class reads the matched fluxes and survey properties from a FITS file and instantiates “source” structures for each set of fluxes. These source structures compute the appropriate spectral colors and store them such that the observation class can return two color arrays to a higher function when requested.

Histogram Library Class The histogram library class creates the histograms for observed and simulated color arrays, and compares them, computing and returning the chi-square goodness of fit statistic. This class uses the observation arrays to calculate optimal bin size and histogram range, and then computes the model histogram based on these values. The class is designed such that the observation values only need to be initialized once, regardless of the number of simulations performed, and each time the model is re-initialized, the comparison histogram and chi-square error are updated. This class also contains methods for saving the histograms to a FITS file.

Simulator Class The simulator class essentially controls, instantiates, and manages all classes except for the luminosity class. It is responsible for taking the input from the minimizer and running the simulation, and then returning the chi-square statistic. It is also responsible for creating the save file and calling the various save functions for each member class when requested. The design of this class allows for the main program to consist only of a parameter fitting procedure, allowing

for different fitting procedures to all rely on one class to produce fitting statistics.

Main Program (Monte Carlo Fitting Code) The main program instantiates both the simulator and luminosity function classes, as well as the initial fitting parameters. It runs the minimization procedure and keeps track of the lowest chi-square error from all runs, telling the simulator to save whenever a minimum chi-square is achieved. It is also responsible for all console output and user interaction, where applicable.

4.1.2 Optimization and Efficiency Considerations

Much thought was put into optimizing the program, as initial versions were very sluggish. C++ Standard Template Library containers were widely used in place of dynamic memory when possible, and static variables were used for functions with local variables which were called often. In addition, costly read/write operations were kept to a minimum, and references were passed in place of values where possible. Despite these and other considerations, the program has an average run-time of about 30 seconds, down from 2-3 minutes, however this is expected to change as methods are altered and components added.

4.2 IDL Interactive Widget and Plotting

The IDL widget consists of two stages, a pre-fitting and post-fitting stage. The pre-fitting stage (shown in Figure 7) reads in the matched fluxes in three separate bands from an observational survey of the user’s choice (saved as an IDL save file), and provides an interface by which the user can specify the parameters of each bandpass for the survey, the luminosity function parameters, and various other simulation parameters. It also displays the templates to be used for simulation in a plot at the top, read from the template file selected towards the bottom. The buttons at the very bottom of the widget are used to start the simulation and re-display previous output. The IDL code passes all of the input data to the C++ fitting code by means of FITS files.

The post-fitting stage (shown in Figure 8) reads the output from the C++ fitting code contained in “output.fits” and generates a set of diagnostic plots, including differential number counts for each observed band, the luminosity function for the fitted parameters, and the output redshift distribution. It also displays the color-color density plots as well as their comparison. All of these diagnostics are provided as a supplement to the goodness-of-fit statistic, to double check the result by eye based on secondary metrics.

5 Testing and Initial Results

During all stages of development, two sample surveys were used to test the functionality of the fitting program. The first sample was the smaller, less sensitive survey done by the Balloon Borne Large Aperture Submillimeter Telescope taken

from Devlin et al. (2009) of the GOODS-North field. The second sample was of the Spitzer First Look Survey (FLS) field taken from the HerMES survey (Smith et al., 2012), conducted using the Herschel Space Telescope’s SPIRE detectors (Pilbratt et al., 2010; Griffin et al., 2010). The tests performed thus far were purely qualitative, and as of yet there are no specific results to present, however initial testing shows that the program functions are expected thus far. An example of the output produced by one of the better fitting runs can be seen in Figure 8. This specific fit was performed on the HerMES data. While the general trend is well reproduced, much improvement remains to be made, as the agreement is still quite poor compared to the chi-square levels we are hoping the fitting program will be able to achieve. Future changes and enhancements, discussed in the next section, aim to improve this agreement.

6 Future Directions

The program in its current state is only the beginning of a larger effort to produce a reusable, highly adaptable IDL widget that can easily characterize samples obtained by multiple instruments across various bands fit with supplied models. Going forward, there are a few main areas where we expect to improve upon the program as it exist today:

- The program will be able to fit all aspects of the model, including luminosity function and model parameters, and the user will be able to specify whether any parameters or portions of the redshift distribution should be kept constant.
- We plan to use a much improved fitting technique, such as a Markov Chain Monte Carlo, which will be capable of a)being restricted to a specific domain and b)sampling the entire space to find a global minimum, as opposed to a local minimum. Such an approach also allows for accurate estimation of parameter uncertainties and can help illuminate if and where there are degeneracies between parameters.
- We plan to provide a wide range of built in model libraries, and update the interface to be very model-specific, so that parameter settings can be specified in terms of the actual values as opposed to library indices. It may be possible, in future version of the program, to code model functions in C++ and eliminate the need for excessive interpolation and approximation.
- Future versions of the code will allow for selection of instrument specific bands, which will include bandpass information. This will allow us to do bandpass corrections and will simplify the analysis process, as flux and confusion limits can be optional arguments, with defaults pre-coded. We may still leave options open for users to specify custom band parameters.
- To enhance the capabilities and provide secondary fitting methods, we plan to utilize differential counts to help fit models, as these are very well measured for many regions of the sky and provide an excellent way to check

that other aspects of the simulation line up with expectation. The more addition fitting statistics we can use, the less degeneracy and ambiguity there will be in our fits.

- More types of statistical distributions will be added in conjunction with the flat, fixed, and Gaussian forms currently used by the program.

The longterm goal for this project is to provide a tool to the astronomical community to use for many years to come. The progress made thus far is encouraging, however this is an ongoing project and one that was never intended to be completed in a few short months. We hope eventually for this work to become my senior thesis, and for the product of that thesis to be the first publicly released version of this program, however we also anticipate further work on this project beyond that point, as more complicated surveys are published and there is a need to add more detailed features to our analysis.

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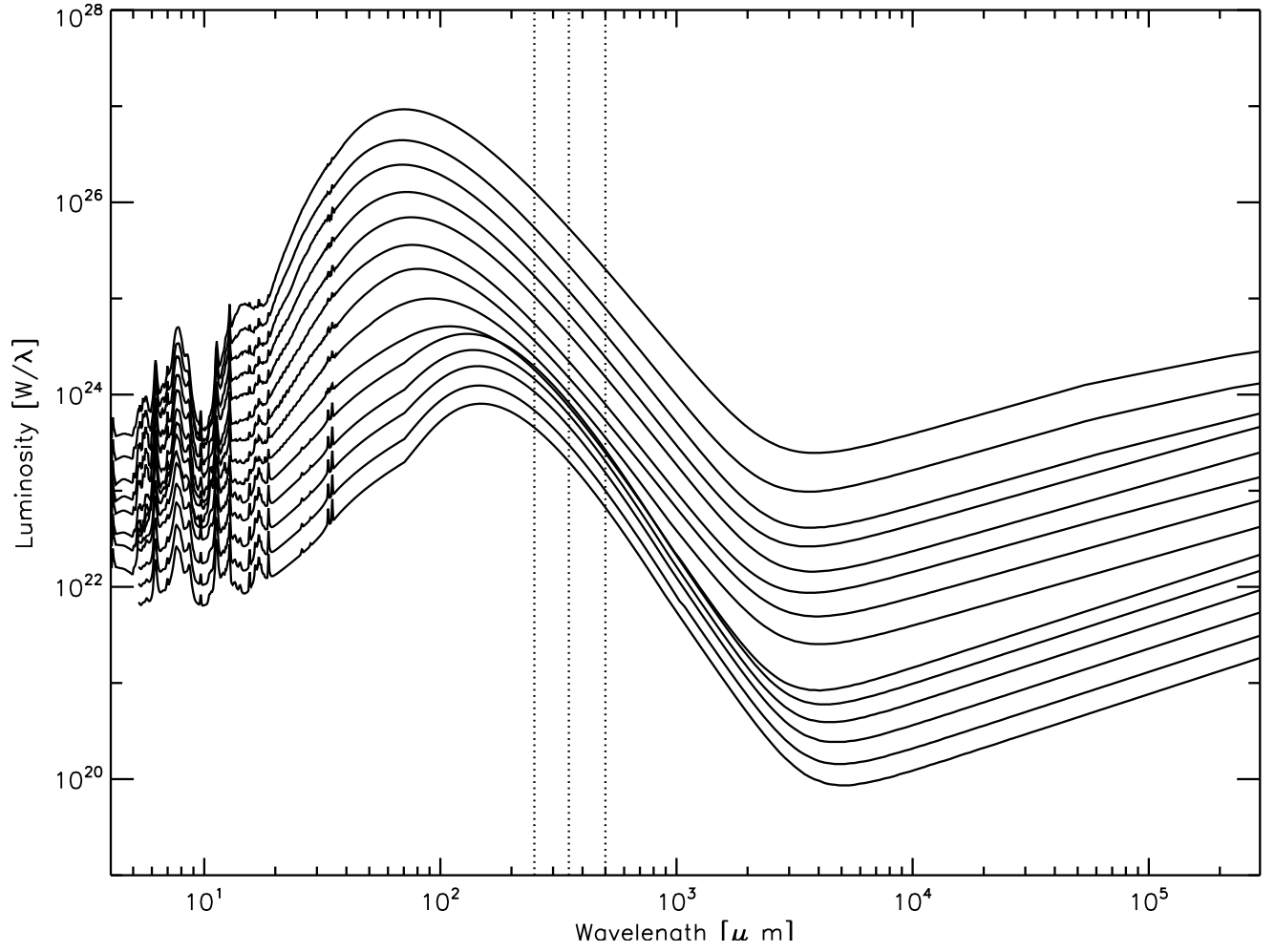


Figure 1: SED Library consisting of LIRG and URLIRG templates [expand]

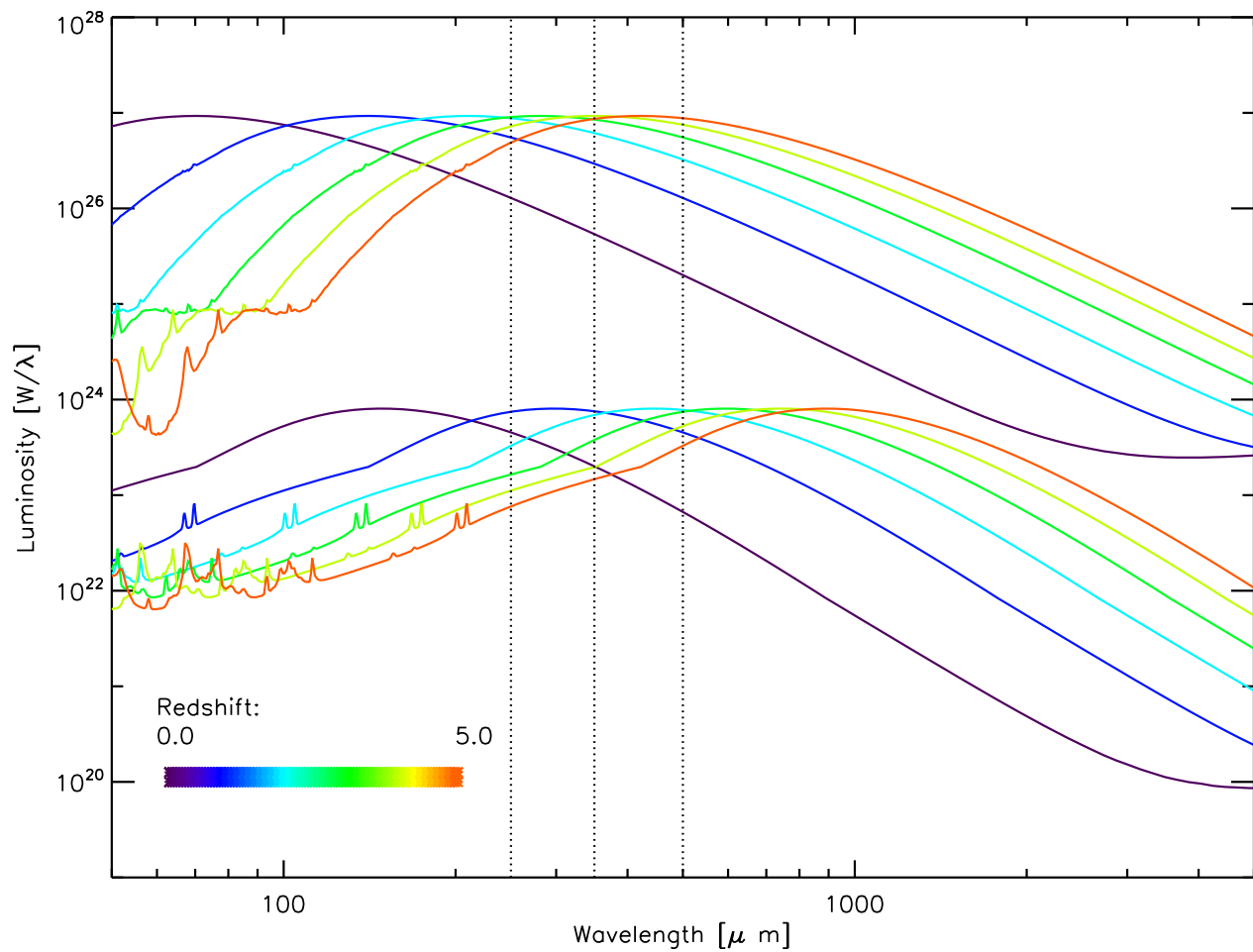


Figure 2: models redshifted [expand]

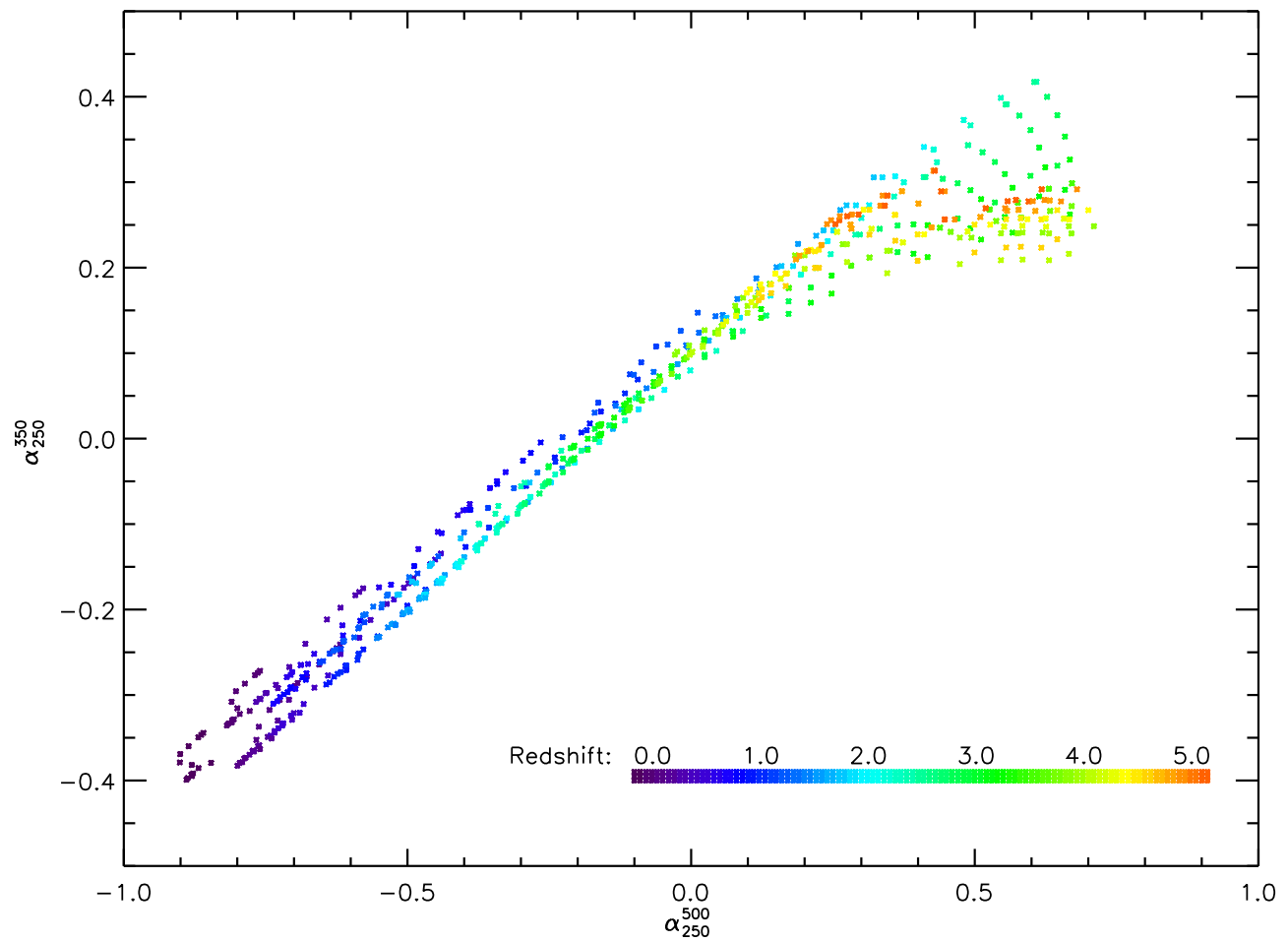


Figure 3: The spectral color pairs produced by the entire library of models for $0 < z < 5$. [expand]

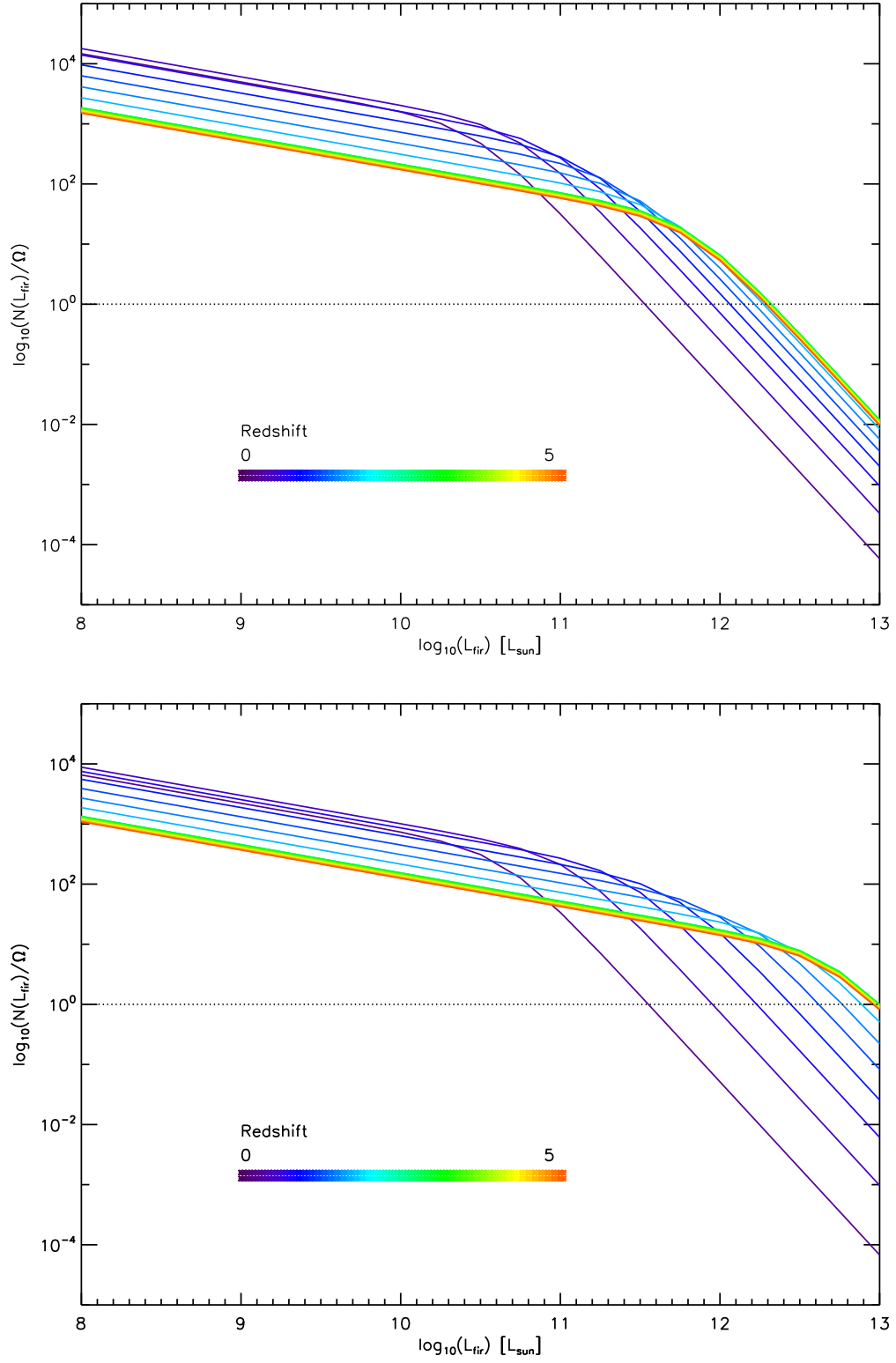


Figure 4: Luminosity function for 2 separate evolutionary models which match at $z=0$

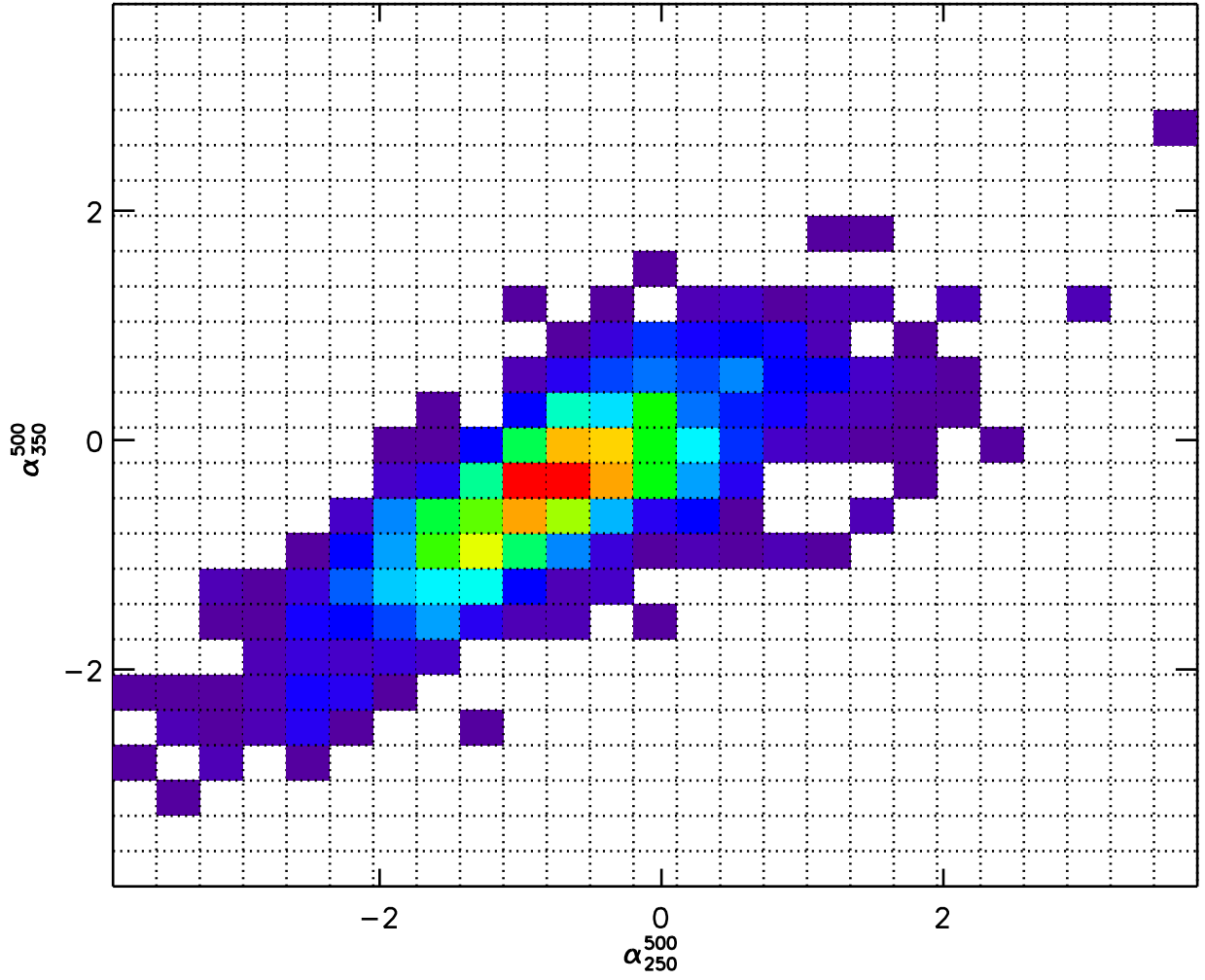


Figure 5: An example of 2-D Color Histogram, created with the HerMES survey data

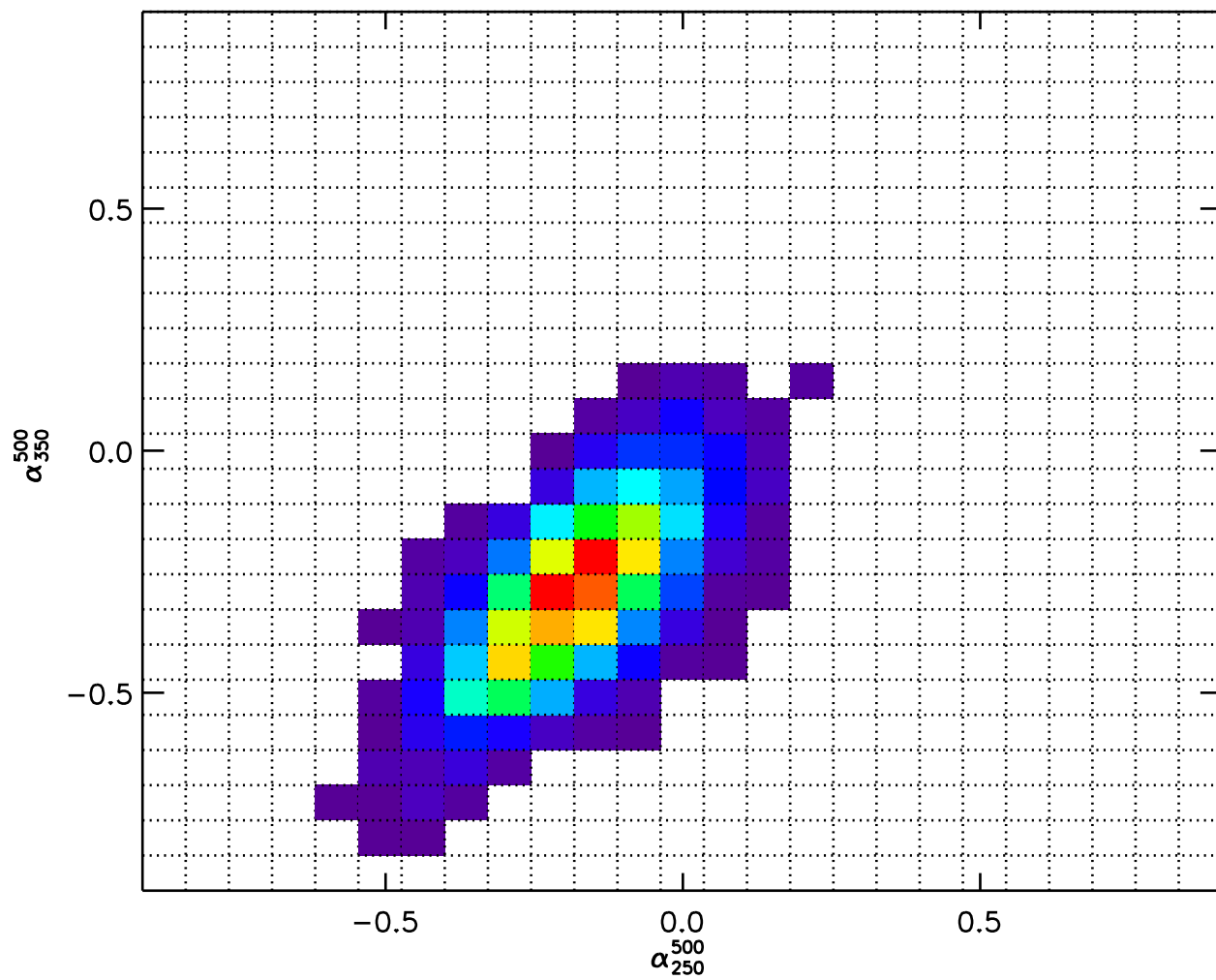


Figure 6: An example of a very rough simulation

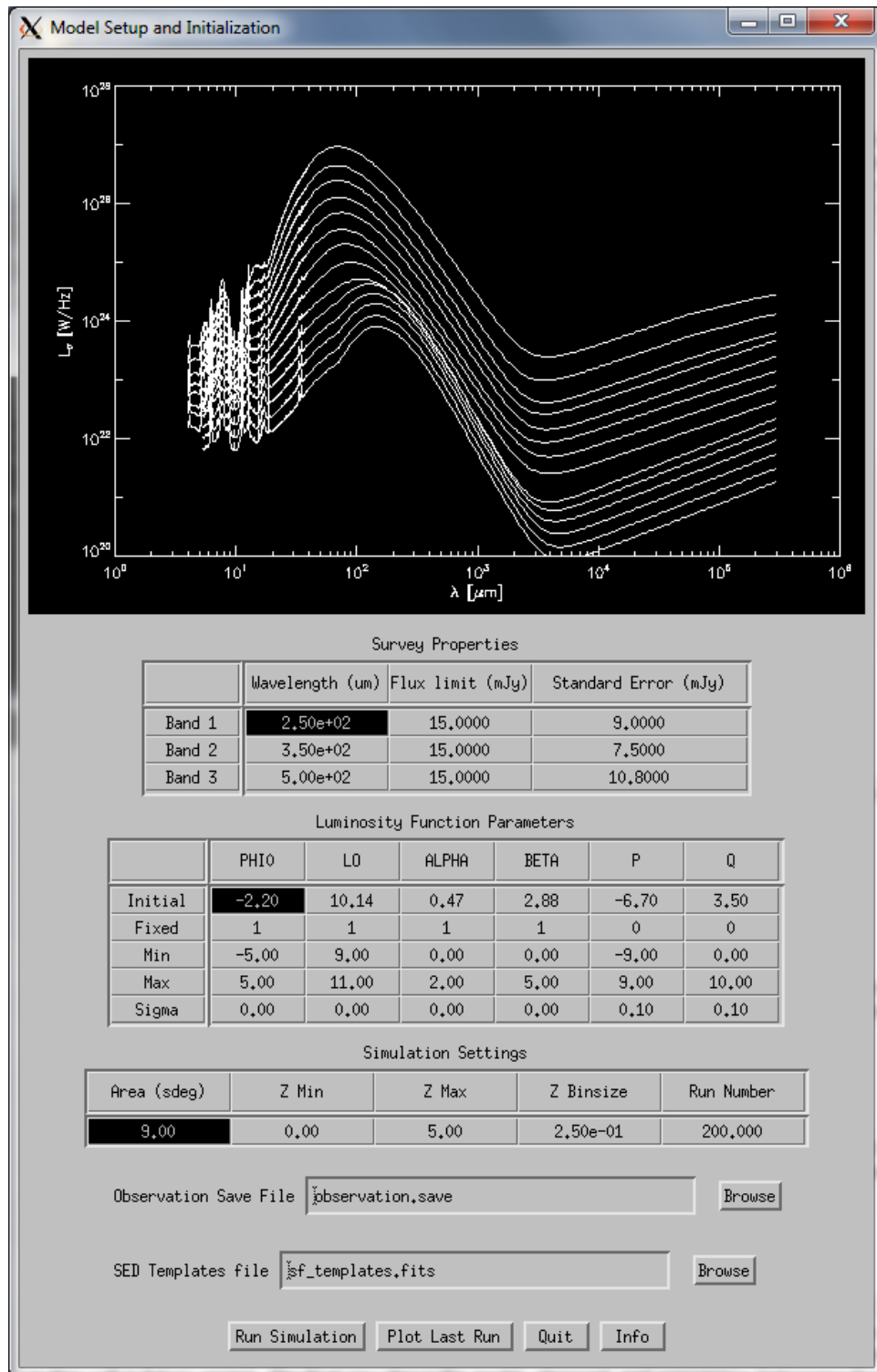


Figure 7: The IDL initial fitting window. At the top are the band parameters, below are the redshift and model parameters, and to the right are the luminosity function and cosmological parameters. The run simulation button creates fits files and runs the C++ executable, while the plot last run button reads the output.fits file in the current directory and produces the output seen in Figure 8.

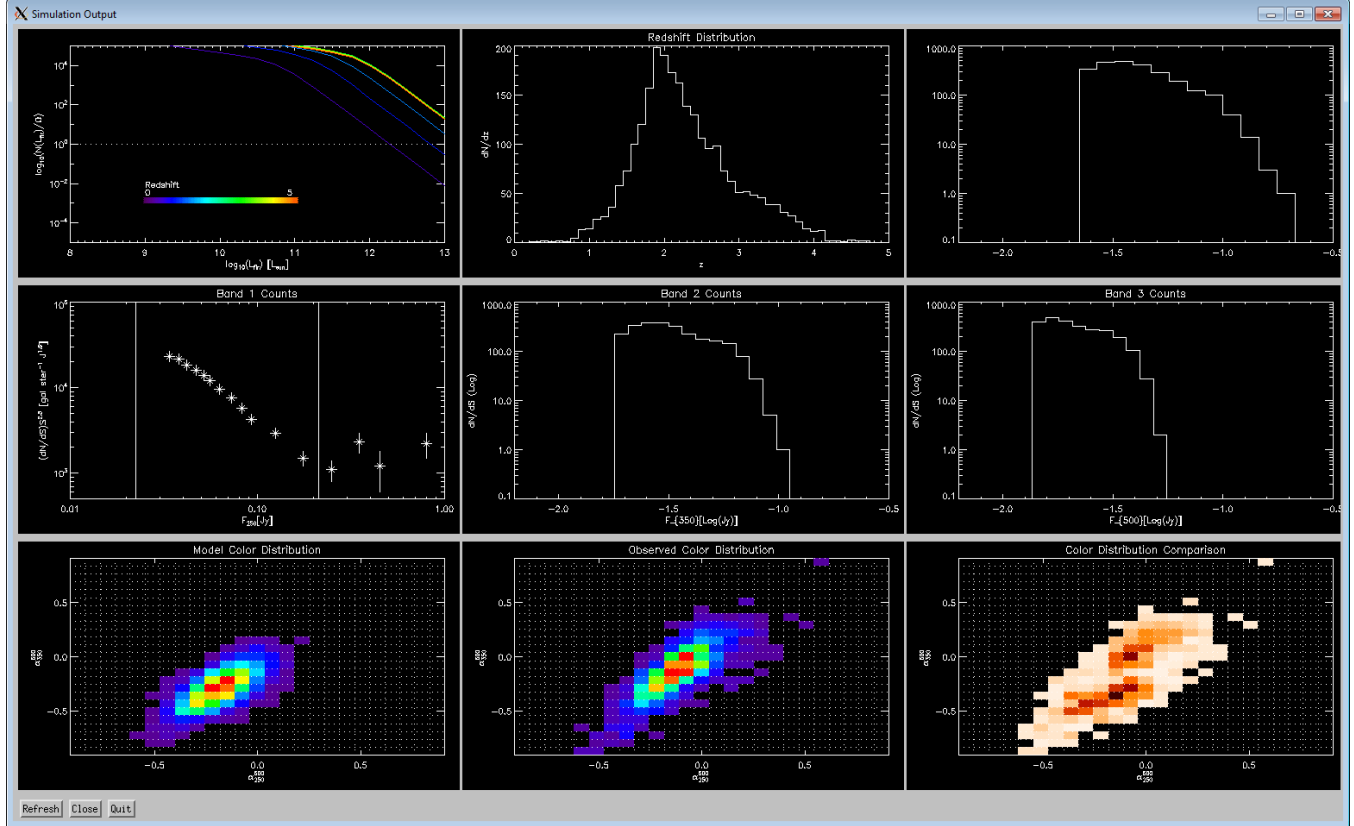


Figure 8: The IDL results display. The top row of the display (left to right) shows the luminosities of the simulated sources, as well as the fitted redshift distribution and the model parameter distributions used. The second row shows differential source counts, however evolution effects have not been removed, as they will in future version. The final row shows the model, observed, and comparison histograms from the simulation.