Spearman's Rho for the AMH Copula: a Beautiful Formula

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Abstract

We derive a beautiful series expansion for Spearman's rho, $\rho(\theta)$ of the Ali-Mikhail-Haq (AMH) copula with parameter θ which is also called α or θ . Further, via experiments we determine the cutoffs to be used for practically fast and accurate computation of $\rho(\theta)$ for all $\theta \in [-1, 1]$.

Keywords: Archimedean copulas, Spearman's rho.

1. Introduction

A copula is a multivariate distribution function with standard uniform univariate margins. Standard references for an introduction are Joe (1997) or Nelsen (2007).

Sklar (1959) shows that for any multivariate distribution function H with margins F_j , $j \in \{1, \ldots, d\}$, there exists a copula C such that

$$H(x_1, \dots, x_d) = C(F_1(x_1), \dots, F_d(x_d)), \ \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^d.$$
 (1)

Conversely, given a copula C and arbitrary univariate distribution functions F_j , $j \in \{1, ..., d\}$, H defined by (1) is a distribution function with marginals F_j , $j \in \{1, ..., d\}$.

2. Archimedean copulas

An Archimedean generator, or simply generator, is a continuous, decreasing function ψ : $[0,\infty] \to [0,1]$ which satisfies $\psi(0) = 1$, $\psi(\infty) := \lim_{t\to\infty} \psi(t) = 0$, and which is strictly decreasing on $[0,\inf\{t:\psi(t)=0\}]$. A d-dimensional copula is called Archimedean if it is of the form

$$C(\boldsymbol{u};\psi) = \psi(\psi^{-1}(u_1) + \dots + \psi^{-1}(u_d)), \ \boldsymbol{u} \in [0,1]^d,$$
 (2)

for some generator ψ with inverse $\psi^{-1}:[0,1] \to [0,\infty]$, where $\psi^{-1}(0) = \inf\{t: \psi(t) = 0\}$. A necessary and sufficient condition for an Archimedean generator ψ to generate a proper copula in all dimensions d is that ψ is completely monotone, i.e., $(-1)^k \psi^{(k)}(t) \geq 0$ for all $t \in (0,\infty)$ and $k \in \mathbb{N}_0$. See Hofert and Maechler (2011) and its references, for considerably more details.

2.1. The Ali-Mikhail-Haq (AMH) copulas

An Ali-Mikhail-Haq (AMH) copula with parameter θ , $\theta \in [-1, 1)$ (where the right boundary, $\theta = 1$ can sometimes be considered valid) has generator

$$\psi_{\text{AMH}}(t,\theta) = \frac{1-\theta}{\exp(t) - \theta}.$$
 (3)

For, $\theta = 0$, clearly $\psi(t) = \exp(-t)$, corresponds to independence. Both "rank based" association measures or correlations, Kendall's τ and Spearman's ρ , are montone in θ , and hence have the same sign as θ .

Kendall's tau is equal to

$$\tau_{\theta} = 1 - \frac{2((1-\theta)^2 \log(1-\theta) + \theta)}{3\theta^2},\tag{4}$$

for $\theta \in [0, 1)$, τ is in $[0, \frac{1}{3})$. The formula (4) needs care when θ is close to zero, and we provide tauAMH() in the **copula** package, using a Taylor series for small $|\theta|$, see help(tauAMH).

3. Spearman's Rho (ρ) for AMH

3.1. The beautiful formula

Nelsen (2007, ex. 5.10, p. 172) provides the following formula for Spearman's ρ for the AMH copula,

$$\rho(\theta) = \frac{12(1+\theta)}{\theta^2} \cdot \operatorname{dilog}(1-\theta) - \frac{24(1-\theta)}{\theta^2} \cdot \log(1-\theta) - \frac{3(\theta+12)}{\theta},\tag{5}$$

where his "dilogarithm" $\operatorname{dilog}(x) = \operatorname{Li}_2(1-x) = \operatorname{polylog}(1-x,2)$, and $\operatorname{Li}_2(x)$ is the usual definition of the dilogarithm (also called "Spence's function"),

$$\operatorname{Li}_{2}(z) = -\int_{0}^{z} \frac{\ln(1-u)}{u} \, \mathrm{d}u = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{z^{k}}{k^{2}}, \quad z \in \mathbb{C} \setminus [1, \infty), \tag{6}$$

where the infinite sum is only applicable for |z| < 1.

With the boundaries for $\theta \in \{-1, 1\}$, this leads to a range of ρ in the interval $[33 - 48 \log 2, 4\pi^2 - 39]$ or approximately [-0.2711, 0.4784].

It is clear that formula (5) cannot be used for $\theta = 0$ and further inspection reveals that it also heavily suffers from cancellation for $|\theta| \ll 1$.

In order to compute ρ accurately for all values of θ , we look at the Taylor series of the respective terms in (5) and will find a beautiful infinite series formula for $\rho(\theta)$.

$$\rho(\theta) = \frac{12(1+\theta)}{\theta^2} \cdot \text{Li}_2(\theta) - \frac{24(1-\theta)}{\theta^2} \cdot \log(1-\theta) - \frac{3(\theta+12)}{\theta}$$

$$= 3/\theta \cdot \left(4(1+\theta)/\theta \cdot \text{Li}_2(\theta) - 8(1-\theta)/\theta \cdot \log(1-\theta) - (\theta+12)\right)$$

$$= \frac{3}{\theta} \cdot r(\theta), \quad \text{where}$$
(7)

$$r(\theta) := 4(1 + \frac{1}{\theta}) \cdot \text{Li}_2(\theta) - 8(\frac{1}{\theta} - 1) \cdot \log(1 - \theta) - (\theta + 12).$$
 (8)

Now, we plug in the Taylor series of both $\text{Li}_2(\theta) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^k}{k^2}$, hence

$$r_{1}(\theta) := (1 + \frac{1}{\theta}) \cdot \text{Li}_{2}(\theta) = \text{Li}_{2}(\theta) + \frac{1}{\theta} \cdot \text{Li}_{2}(\theta) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^{k}}{k^{2}} + \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^{k-1}}{k^{2}} =$$

$$= 1 + \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{k^{2} + (k+1)^{2}}{k^{2}(k+1)^{2}} \theta^{k},$$
(9)

and $\log(1-\theta) = \theta + \frac{\theta^2}{2} + \frac{\theta^3}{3} + \ldots = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^k}{k}$, hence

$$r_2(\theta) := (1 - \frac{1}{\theta})\log(1 - \theta) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^k}{k} - \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^{k-1}}{k} = -1 + \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^k}{k(k+1)}.$$
 (10)

Consequently, first from (8), then plugging in (9) and (10),

$$r(\theta) = 4r_1(\theta) - 8r_2(\theta) - (12 + \theta) =$$

$$= (4 \cdot 1 - 8(-1) - 12) + (4 \cdot \frac{5}{4} - 8 \cdot \frac{1}{2} - 1)\theta + \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \left(\frac{4(k^2 + (k+1)^2)}{k^2(k+1)^2} - \frac{8}{k(k+1)}\right)\theta^k =$$

$$= 0 + 0 \cdot \theta + \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \frac{4(k^2 + (k+1)^2) - 8k(k+1)}{k^2(k+1)^2}\theta^k =$$

$$= \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \frac{4(2k^2 + 2k + 1)^2 - 8k(k+1)}{k^2(k+1)^2}\theta^k =$$

$$= \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \frac{4}{k^2(k+1)^2}\theta^k = \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \frac{\theta^k}{\binom{k+1}{2}^2},$$
(11)

a beautiful formula with reciprocal binomial coefficients, and finally, as $\rho(\theta) = \frac{3}{\theta} \cdot r(\theta)$ (7) from the above,

$$\rho(\theta) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{3}{\binom{k+2}{2}^2} \cdot \theta^k = \frac{\theta}{3} + \frac{\theta^2}{12} + \frac{3\theta^3}{100} + \frac{\theta^4}{75} + \dots$$
 (12)

the "beautiful formula" for Spearman's ρ of an AMH copula with parameter θ . Compare this compact formula

$$\rho(\theta) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{3\theta^k}{\binom{k+2}{2}^2}$$

with the original three term formula (5) which involves dilog() and log(), to understand why I call it beautiful. Note further that the "beautiful formula" clearly shows the approximate linearity of $\rho(\theta)$ for small $|\theta|$. Note that the first few coefficients a_k in $\rho(\theta) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} a_k \theta^k$ are

- > require(sfsmisc) #--> mat2tex(), mult.fig(), eaxis()
- > k <- 1:9; ak <- MASS::fractions(12/((k+1)*(k+2))^2)
- > rbind(k = k, `\$a_k\$` = as.character(ak))

	k	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ĺ	a_k	1/3	1/12	3/100	1/75	1/147	3/784	1/432	1/675	3/3025

3.2. Accurate and efficient R implementation of ρ_{AMH}

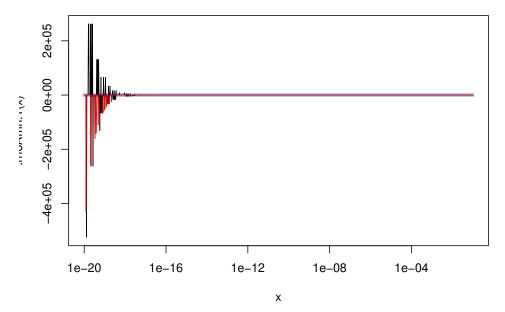
In the following R code, we use a as short form for the copula parameter θ (which is also called α in the literature):

```
> ##' Version 1: Direct formula from Nelsen:
> .rhoAmh.1 <- function(a) {</pre>
     Li2 <- gsl::dilog(a)
     12 * (1 + a) / a<sup>2</sup> * Li2 - 24 * (1 - a) / a<sup>2</sup> * log1p(- a) - 3 * (a + 12) / a
   7
> .rhoAmh.1b <- function(a) {</pre>
     Li2 <- gsl::dilog(a)
     ## factored out 3/a from version 1:
     3/a * (4 * (1 + a) / a * Li2 - 8 * (1 - a) / a * log1p(- a) - (a + 12))
   }
> ##' Version 2:
> .rhoAmh.2 <- function(a, e.sml = 1e-11) {
     stopifnot(length(a) <= 1)</pre>
     if(abs(a) < e.sml) { ## if |a| << 1, do better than the direct formula:
         a*(1/3 + a*(1/12 + a*(3/100 + a/75)))
     } else { ## regular a
         Li2 <- gsl::dilog(a)
         3/a * (4 * (1 + 1/a) * Li2 - 8 * (1/a - 1) * log1p(- a) - (a + 12))
> ##' Series version with N terms:
> rhoAmh.T <- function(a, N) {</pre>
       stopifnot(length(N) == 1, N == as.integer(N), N >= 1)
       if(N \le 4)
           switch(N,
                   a/3.
                   a/3*(1 + a/4),
                   a*(1/3 + a*(1/12 + a* 3/100)),
                   a*(1/3 + a*(1/12 + a*(3/100 + a/75))))
       else { ## N >= 5
           n \leftarrow N:1 \#--> sum smallest to largest
           if(is(a, "mpfr")) ## so all computations work in high precision
               n <- mpfr(n, precBits=max(.getPrec(a)))</pre>
           cf <- ## 3/choose(n+2, 2)^2
                3/((n+1)*(n+2)/2)^2
           a2n \leftarrow outer(n,a, function(x,y) y^x) ## a2n[i,j] := a[j] ^ n[i]
           colSums(cf * a2n)
       }
```

Now, the first graphical exploration, notably of the original Nelsen formula, .rhoAmh.1() and its variant very slight improvement .rhoAmh.1b()

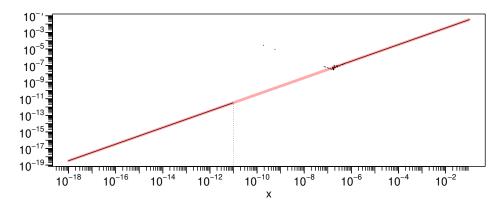
```
> r1 <- curve( .rhoAmh.1 (x), 1e-20, .1, log="x", n=1025)
> r1b <- curve( .rhoAmh.1b(x), n=1025, add=TRUE, col=2)
> r2 <- curve( Vectorize(.rhoAmh.2)(x), n=1025, add=TRUE,
```

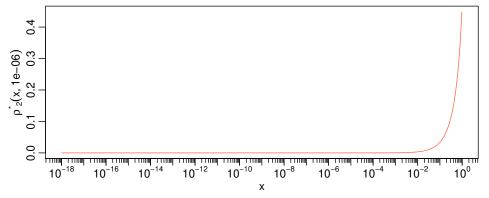
```
col=adjustcolor("blue4",1/4), lwd = 5) \\ > tab <- cbind(as.data.frame(r1), y.b = r1b$y, y2 = r2$y) \\
```



expose the big problems (y-values between -400'000 and 200'000 where $|\rho()| < 1$ is known!). Investingating tab shows that 1b is very slightly better than 1, but looking closer, e.g. also with curve(.rhoAmh.1(x), 1e-20, .1, log="x", n=1025, ylim=c(-1,1)*.1), shows that Nelsen's direct formula is really unusable for $|\theta| < 10^{-11}$ approximately.

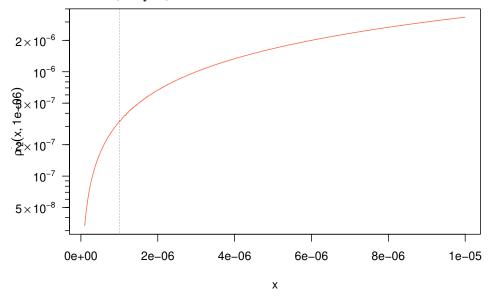
So, .rhoAmh.2() using a 4-terms series approximation for $|\theta| < e.sml$ is much better, but it is still not good enough, as is revealed by drawing it once with its default cutoff $e.sml = 10^{-11}$ and then in red with a higher cutoff 10^{-6} (and in log-log and regular y-axis scale):





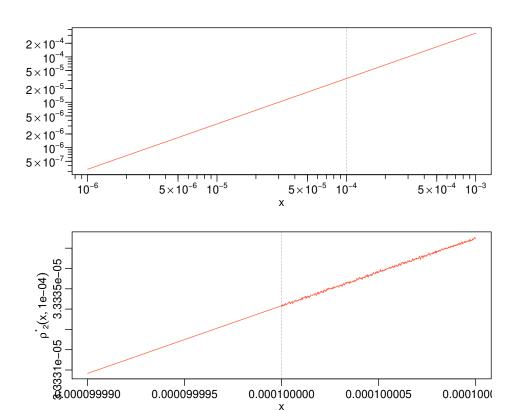
So the default cutoff (10^{-11}) is too small, as the explicit (Nelsen) formula breaks down between the cutoff and $\approx 10^{-7}$. Hence we are aiming for a cutoff $> 10^{-7}$, momentarily $= 10^{-6}$, and zoom into its neighborhood:

```
> rhoAcurve(1e-6, 1e-7, 1e-5, log = "y", col="tomato"); myAxes(2)
> abline(v=1e-6, lty=3, lwd=1/2)
```



Use still a larger cutoff:

```
> cc <- 1e-4 ; op <- mult.fig(2, marP= -c(1,0,1,1))$old.par
> rhoAcurve(cc, 1e-6, 1e-3, log = "xy", col="tomato",ylab=""); myAxes(1:2)
```



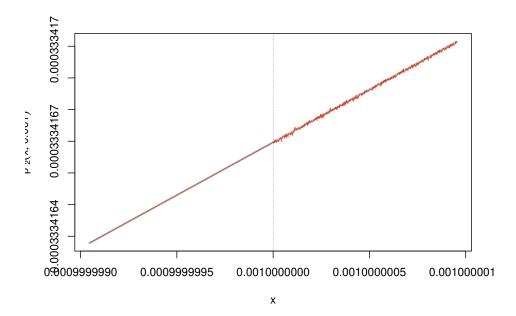
Still larger cutoff:

```
> cc <- 1e-3

> rhoAcurve(cc, cc*(1-2^-20), cc*(1+2^-20), log="y",yaxt="s", col="tomato")

> abline(v=cc, lty=3, lwd=1/2)

> rhoAcurve(cc*10, add=TRUE, col=adjustcolor(1,.25), lwd=3)
```



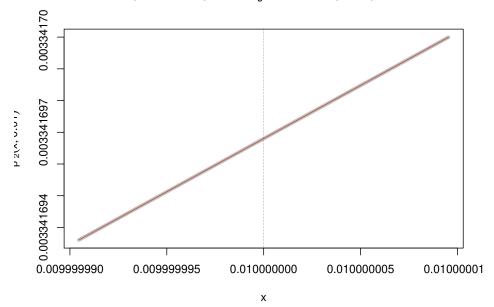
Still larger ...

> cc <- 0.01

> rhoAcurve(cc, cc*(1-2^-20), cc*(1+2^-20), log="y",yaxt="s", col="tomato")

> abline(v=cc, lty=3, lwd=1/2)

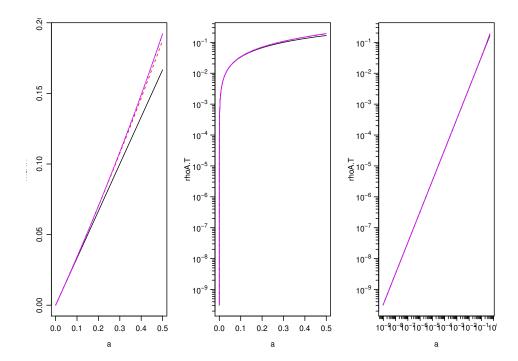
> rhoAcurve(cc*10, add=TRUE, col=adjustcolor(1,.25),lwd=5)



And "visibly", it still seems perfect. This would suggest that a 4-terms approximation is to be preferred to the direct formula for $|\theta < 10^{-3}|$, possibly even $|\theta < 10^{-2}|$. We will determine the best k-terms series approximation for different cutoffs for k = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, in the following. Looking at the series approximations (first order up to 6-th order) a first time,

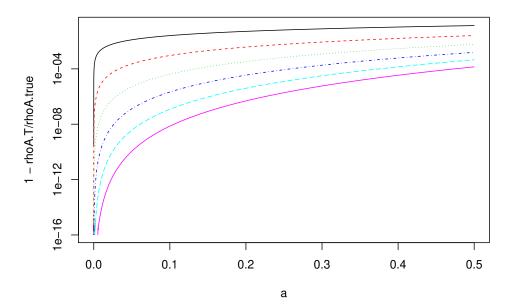
```
> a <- 2^seq(-30,-1, by = 1/32)# 0 < a <= 0.5
> rhoA.T <- vapply(1:6, rhoAmh.T, a=a, numeric(length(a)))
> op <- mult.fig(mfcol=c(1,3), mgp=c(2.5,.8,0))$old.par
> matplot(a, rhoA.T, type="1")
```

```
> matplot(a, rhoA.T, type="1", log="y", yaxt="n") ; myAxes(2)
> matplot(a, rhoA.T, type="1", log="xy", axes=FALSE); myAxes(1:2);box()
> par(op)
```



Now, rather look at the *relative* approximation error of the different Taylor series approximations:

```
> rhoA.true <- rhoAmh.T(a,50)
> chk.w.mpfr <- FALSE ## Sys.info()[["user"]] == "maechler"
> if(chk.w.mpfr) {
    require(Rmpfr)## get the "really" "true" values:
    print(system.time(rhA.mp <- rhoAmh.T(mpfr(a, prec=256), 50))) ## 3.95 sec (lynne)
    print(system.time(rhA.mp1 <- rhoAmh.T(mpfr(a, prec=256), 60))) ## 4.54 sec
    stopifnot(all.equal(rhA.mp, rhoA.true, tol = 1e-15))
        print(all.equal(rhA.mp, rhoA.true, tol = 1e-20)) ## 6.99415....e-17 [64bit, lynne]
    ## see if the 50 terms have converged:
    print( all.equal(rhA.mp, rhA.mp1, tol = 1e-30) )
    ## "Mean relative difference: 2.4958....e-22"
    ## ==> 50 terms seem way enough for double prec
}
> matplot(a, 1 - rhoA.T / rhoA.true, type="1", log="y")
```



We rather provide a function for *visualizing* the relative approximation errors of the different Taylor series approximations in a flexible way:

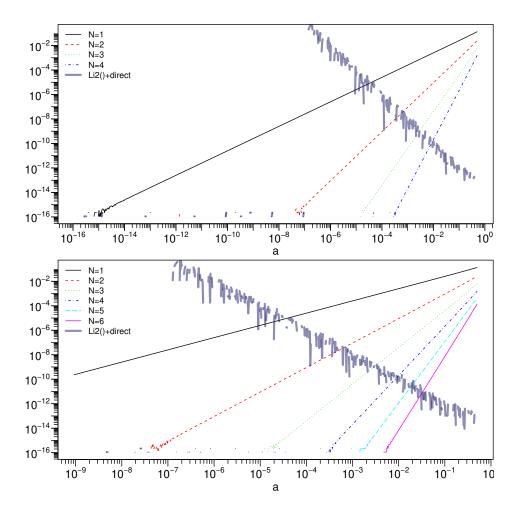
```
> pl.relE.rhoAMH <- function(N.max, N.inf = 50, N.min = 1, 12a.lim = c(-30, -1),
                               n.p.u = 2^round(log2(1000 / diff(l2a.lim))),
                               cut.rA2 = 1e-7,
                               colX = adjustcolor("midnightblue", 0.5), ...)
   {
       stopifnot(length(12a.lim) >= 2, 12a.lim < 0, n.p.u >= 1,
                 N.max >= N.min, N.min >= 1, N.inf > N.max + 4,
                 (N3 \leftarrow c(N.min, N.max, N.inf)) == as.integer(N3))
       a \leftarrow 2^seq(12a.lim[1], 12a.lim[2], by = 1/n.p.u)
       N.s <- N.min:N.max
       rhoA.true <- rhoAmh.T(a, N.inf)</pre>
       rhoA.T <- vapply(N.s, rhoAmh.T, a=a, numeric(length(a))) # matrix</pre>
       rhoA.v2 <- Vectorize(.rhoAmh.2)(a, cut.rA2) # "Li2()+direct" below
       ## matplot() compatible colors and lty's
       cols <- palette()[1 + (N.s-1) %% 6]
       ltys <- (1:5)
                        [1 + (N.s-1) \% 5]
       matplot(a, 1 - rhoA.T / rhoA.true, type="1", log="xy",
               col=cols, lty=ltys, axes=FALSE, frame=TRUE, ...)
       myAxes(1:2)
       lines(a, 1 - rhoA.v2 / rhoA.true, col= colX, lwd=3)
       legend("topleft", c(paste0("N=",N.s), "Li2()+direct"),
              col=c(cols, colX), lty=c(ltys, 1), lwd=c(rep(1, length(N.s)), 3),
              cex=.75, bty="n")
       invisible(list(a=a, rhoA.T=rhoA.T, rhoA.v2 = rhoA.v2))
```

Note that the "Li2()+direct" comparison is only for $a = \theta > 10^{-7}$, as that is used as cutoff per default, cut.rA2 = 1e-7. And now look at the "very nice" pictures, using 12a= $\log_2(a)$ to choose the range of $a = \theta$:

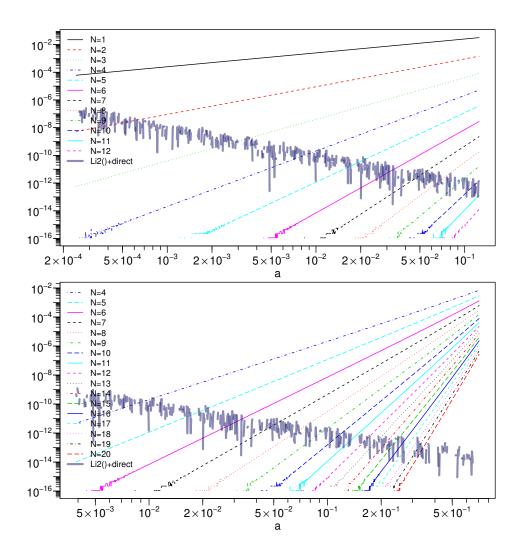
```
> op <- mult.fig(2, marP=-c(1.5,1.5,2,1))$old.par
> pl.relE.rhoAMH(4, l2a=c(-53,-1), ylab="")
```

> pl.relE.rhoAMH(6,

ylab="")



Successively zooming in "to the right", to larger a, first, with range $2^{-12} - 2^{-3}$, and up to 12 terms, then zooming into range $2^{-8} - 2^{-.5}$, and using 20,

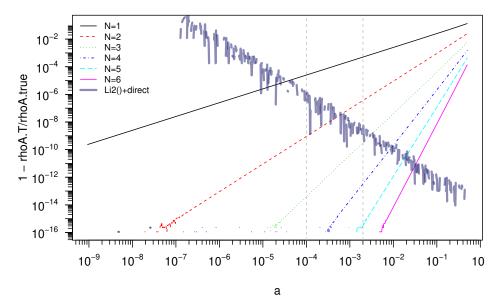


The next one is "just for fun", to see if there is consistency when $N \to N_{\infty}$, i.e., our N.inf = 50, and not shown here:

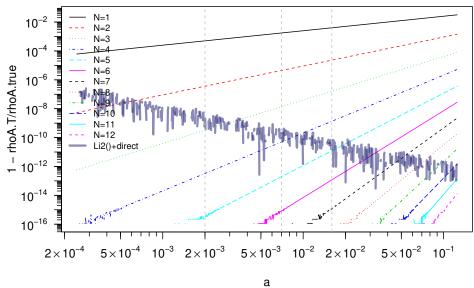
```
> par(op); pl.relE.rhoAMH(40, 12a=c(-5, -.5), N.min = 10)
```

The following plots are now used to read off the final cutoff used for the (hidden) .rhoAmhCopula() function in package copula which underlies rho(amhCopula(.)):

```
> pl.relE.rhoAMH(6)
> abline(v=1e-4, col="gray", lty=2)#-> N=2 cutoff
> abline(v=2e-3, col="gray", lty=2)#-> N=3 cutoff
```



```
> pl.relE.rhoAMH(12, 12a=c(-12, -3))
> abline(v= 2e-3, col="gray", lty=2)#-> N=3 cutoff
> abline(v= 7e-3, col="gray", lty=2)#-> N=4 cutoff
> abline(v=16e-3, col="gray", lty=2)#-> N=5 cutoff
```



Consequently, the implementation in copula is

```
> copula ::: .rhoAmhCopula
function (a)
{
    if (is.na(a))
        return(a)
    aa <- abs(a)
    if (aa < 7e-16)
        a/3
    else if (aa < 1e-04)
        a/3 * (1 + a/4)</pre>
```

```
else if (aa < 0.002)
        a * (1/3 + a * (1/12 + a * 3/100))
    else if (aa < 0.007)
        a * (1/3 + a * (1/12 + a * (3/100 + a/75)))
    else if (aa < 0.016)
        a * (1/3 + a * (1/12 + a * (3/100 + a * (1/75 + a/147))))
    else {
        3/a * (4 * (1 + 1/a) * dilog(a) - (if (a < 1)
            8 * (1/a - 1) * log1p(-a)
        else 0) - (a + 12)
    }
}
visualized on its full range [-1, 1],
> rhoAMH <- Vectorize(copula:::.rhoAmhCopula)</pre>
> curve(rhoAMH, n=1025, -1, 1, ylim= c(-1,1), xlab = quote(theta),
         ylab="", col="tomato", lwd=2, las=1)
> abline(0, 1/3, lty=2, col=(adjustcolor(c2 <- "orange2", 2/3)))
> curve(x/3*(1+x/4), lty=2, col=(adjustcolor(c3 <- "blue", 1/2)),
         -1.1,1.1, add=TRUE); x. <- .65
> text(.4 , .3 , quote(rho[plain(AMH)](theta)),col="tomato")
> text(.88, .23, quote(y == theta/3), col=c2)
> text(.7, .05, quote(y == theta/3*(1+theta/4)), col=adjustcolor(c3, 1/2))
> segments(.55, .10, x., x./3*(1+x./4), 1ty="82", col=adjustcolor(c3, 1/2))
> abline(h=0, v=0, lty=3); rect(-1,-1,1,1, lty=3)
  1.0
  0.5
                                               \rho_{AMH}(\theta)
  0.0
 -0.5
        -1.0
                      -0.5
                                     0.0
                                                    0.5
                                                                  1.0
                                      θ
```

Finally, we may add some simple tests, that the **copula** package's rho(<amhCopula>, *) did not fulfill because of the notorious cancellations, previously. Note that in fact, we are only looking at very small (positive) θ , and checking that already the *first* two order series approximations,

$$\rho_{\text{AMH}}(\theta) \approx \frac{\theta}{3} (1 + \frac{\theta}{4}) \approx \theta/3$$
(13)

are all already good approximations or very accurate, depending on $|\theta|$:

Session Information

- > toLatex(sessionInfo(), locale=FALSE)
 - R version 3.6.2 Patched (2020-02-04 r77768), x86_64-pc-linux-gnu
 - Running under: Fedora 30 (Thirty)
 - Matrix products: default
 - BLAS: /u/maechler/R/D/r-patched/F30-64-inst/lib/libRblas.so
 - LAPACK: /u/maechler/R/D/r-patched/F30-64-inst/lib/libRlapack.so
 - Base packages: base, datasets, grDevices, graphics, grid, methods, parallel, splines, stats, stats4, tools, utils
 - Other packages: Rmpfr 0.8-1, VGAM 1.1-2, abind 1.4-5, bbmle 1.0.22, copula 0.999-20, gmp 0.5-13.6, gridExtra 2.3, gsl 2.1-6, lattice 0.20-38, mev 1.13.1, qrng 0.0-7, randtoolbox 1.30.1, rngWELL 0.10-6, rugarch 1.4-1, sfsmisc 1.1-3
 - Loaded via a namespace (and not attached): ADGofTest 0.3, DistributionUtils 0.6-0, GeneralizedHyperbolic 0.8-4, KernSmooth 2.23-16, MASS 7.3-51.5, Matrix 1.2-18, Rcpp 1.0.3, Rsolnp 1.16, Runuran 0.27, SkewHyperbolic 0.4-0, TruncatedNormal 2.1, alabama 2015.3-1, bdsmatrix 1.3-4, boot 1.3-24, compiler 3.6.2, digest 0.6.23, evaluate 0.14, evd 2.3-3, expm 0.999-4, gtable 0.3.0, htmltools 0.4.0, knitr 1.27, ks 1.11.6, magrittr 1.5, mclust 5.4.5, mvtnorm 1.0-12, nleqslv 3.3.2, nloptr 1.2.1, numDeriv 2016.8-1.1, partitions 1.9-22, pcaPP 1.9-73, polynom 1.4-0, pspline 1.0-18, rlang 0.4.4, rmarkdown 2.1, spd 2.0-1, stabledist 0.7-1, stringi 1.4.4, stringr 1.4.0, truncnorm 1.0-8, xfun 0.12, xts 0.12-0, yaml 2.2.1, zoo 1.8-7

```
> my.strsplit( packageDescription("copula")[["Date"]] )
NA-- 2020-02-03
```

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