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**Huy Tai Ha** (tha@tulane.edu), **Erik Stokes\*** (stokes.erik@gmail.com) and **Fabrizio Zanello** (zanello@mtu.edu). *Pure  $O$ -sequences and Matroid  $h$ -vectors.*

A long-standing conjecture of Stanley states that the  $h$ -vector of any matroid is a pure  $O$ -sequence. A number of special cases have been proven but, to date, they have been generally based on explicitly constructing the required artinian, level monomial ideals. We take a different approach and concentrate instead on the properties of pure  $O$ -sequences. In particular, we state a conjecture on pure  $O$ -sequences, which we are able to prove for small socle degrees. Using this new technique we are able to prove Stanley's conjecture for all rank 3 matroids. (Received September 12, 2010)