This study examines how, in 1850s, men were using the power of the press, manly rhetoric, and male dominated organizations to marginalize women and wrest control of the Spiritualist movement. The practical assertions of male prerogatives were usually invoked by men who also vocalized strong support of the advancement of woman. This divide between the discourse of Spiritualist men and their actions illuminates the limits of gender progressivism in the Spiritualist movement, the experiences and motivations of male mediums, and the intellectual freedom enjoyed within the movement.