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Did This All Happen Before?

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The 19th Century was rife with fake philanthropy movements, from temperance leagues, to anti-smoking groups, to hygiene organizations. One of these movements was organized about spreading hysteria and panic related to syphilis . . . regardless of the fact that syphilis was not a pressing danger to the society (based on its small size and mild symptoms). Nevertheless, repressive laws were instituted to fight it and “irresponsible power” given to the government—in the name of a disease whose dangers were wildly exaggerated. Sound familiar?

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