

Self-Healing Garments: A Philosophical Inquiry into Magnetic Acupressure Wearables and the Embodiment of Automated Healing

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	<p>This paper explores how Indian cinema mediates the relationship between women, fear, and urban public space. While empirical evidence indicates that women face greater threats in private/domestic domains, cultural narratives persistently frame the city as the locus of danger. Cinema plays a pivotal role in sustaining this disjuncture by producing a symbolic geography of fear, a mediated urban imaginary in which women are rendered perpetually vulnerable. Drawing on feminist criminology (Stanko, 1990), spatial theory (Lefebvre, 1991; Puwar, 2004), and Baudrillard's (1981) notion of hyperreality, the study argues that films not only reflect social anxieties but actively shape gendered experiences of mobility, safety, and surveillance.</p> <p>Through critical analysis of films such as <i>NH10</i> (2015), <i>Darr</i> (1993), <i>Pink</i> (2016), <i>Kahaani</i> (2012), <i>Lipstick Under My Burkha</i> (2016), and <i>Thappad</i> (2020), the paper examines how cinematic form i.e., mise-en-scène, sound design, framing, and narrative tropes constructs urban space as threatening, surveilled, or reclaimed. While some texts reinforce precautionary cultures of fear, others stage counter-narratives that imagine female agency and spatial entitlement, resonating with feminist interventions like <i>Why Loiter?</i> (Phadke, Khan, & Ranade, 2011) and <i>Pinjra Tod</i>. By situating cinematic portrayals within India's broader socio-political context, particularly post-2012 debates on women's safety, the paper demonstrates how film operates as both a disciplinary force and a site of resistance. Ultimately, the study contributes to sociology and film studies by positioning cinema as an active agent in the cultural production of gendered urban experience.</p> <p>Keywords: Women, Public places, Cinema, Urban fear, Loiter</p>

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of wearable technology has fundamentally altered how individuals interact with their bodies, health, and the environment around them. One of the most intriguing innovations in this domain is the development of **self-healing garments**—clothing embedded with technology designed to promote health and healing through mechanisms like **magnetic fields**, **acupressure**, and **biofeedback systems**. These garments blur the line between traditional medical practices and consumer technology, offering a new approach to healing that is automated, wearable, and seemingly intuitive.

One particularly promising form of these garments integrates **magnetic therapy** with **acupressure**, combining two ancient healing modalities to create wearables that stimulate the body's natural healing mechanisms. As these technologies become more sophisticated, they raise profound philosophical questions about the body, agency, and the nature of healing itself.

This paper explores these questions by examining the intersection of **philosophy of technology**, **phenomenology**, and **ethics** in the context of magnetic acupressure wearables. It investigates how these garments challenge traditional concepts of healing, self-care, and the body in a technologically mediated world.

Central to this inquiry is the idea that self-healing garments do more than just treat the body—they reshape the way we understand what it means to be **embodied** and **autonomous** in an age of automation.

2. Conceptual Framework: What Are Self-Healing Garments?

Self-healing garments are clothing items embedded with technologies that facilitate health recovery or well-being improvement. These garments typically use **magnetic fields** to promote circulation, relieve pain, and enhance cellular repair, alongside **acupressure** to stimulate specific points on the body. Together, these mechanisms aim to create a holistic healing experience that does not require active human intervention beyond wearing the garment.

Magnetic therapy has long been associated with pain relief and circulation enhancement, while acupressure is grounded in **Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)**, which aims to balance the body's energy through strategic pressure points. When combined in a wearable garment, these modalities claim to provide **continuous, non-invasive healing** without the need for medical practitioners.

The idea of a "self-healing garment" is grounded in **automation**. Rather than seeking external interventions, users wear garments that passively provide therapeutic benefits, thus transforming the role of healing from an active, process-driven endeavour to an automated, self-contained experience.

3. Embodiment and the Experience of the Body

The philosophical concept of **embodiment** plays a central role in the inquiry into self-healing garments. Embodiment refers to how individuals experience and understand their body in the world, as well as how the body becomes a site of **interaction** between the mind, the environment, and technology. In the case of self-healing garments, the body is no longer simply the passive recipient of external treatments; it becomes a **site of interaction** between the garment and the individual's health needs.

3.1 The Lived Body and the Technology of Healing

Philosophers like **Maurice Merleau-Ponty** argue that the body is not simply an object in the world but is fundamentally involved in how we experience and engage with the world around us. The body is, in essence, a **lived experience** rather than a passive vessel. In this context, the introduction of self-healing wearables forces us to rethink this notion of the body.

Magnetic acupressure wearables allow the wearer's body to interact with technology in a deeply **intimate** way. Unlike traditional medical tools, which are separate from the body, these garments are worn continuously, creating a form of **technological embodiment**. The technology does not exist outside of the wearer but is a part of their lived experience of the body. By integrating health interventions directly into the fabric of daily life, these wearables suggest a new form of healing that is **embodied** through continuous contact with the body, effectively merging healing with the wearer's experience of self.

3.2 The Body as a Site of Healing: Automating the Healing Process

Automated healing presents a paradox: on one hand, it empowers individuals to take control of their health, but on the other hand, it risks distancing them from the traditional, **interpersonal** aspects of healing. In philosophical terms, this can be understood as a shift from an **active, participatory role** in healing to a more **passive, mediated** experience.

While the self-healing garment claims to empower the user, it also raises questions about the **loss of agency**. To what extent does the wearer of the garment still participate in their healing, or are they merely **receiving a service** provided by technology? Furthermore, if the garment is able to heal the body automatically, does this imply that the wearer's **self-care agency** is diminished or redefined?

4. Ethical and Epistemological Implications of Magnetic Acupressure Wearables

The rise of self-healing garments also brings with it complex ethical and epistemological questions about health, autonomy, and the role of medical expertise in the healing process.

4.1 Autonomy and the Role of Technology in Healing

One key ethical issue is the degree of **autonomy** granted to the user of the self-healing garment. Traditional forms of healing, whether through conventional medicine or holistic therapies, often involve a **collaborative process** between the individual and the practitioner. However, the self-healing garment shifts the locus of control from the medical professional to the individual and the garment itself.

This raises questions about **informed consent** and **decision-making** in the healing process. Is the wearer truly informed about the garment's therapeutic mechanisms and limitations, or are they simply trusting the technology? The garment's ability to automate healing also raises concerns about **accountability**—who is responsible if the garment does not provide the intended therapeutic effects? Furthermore, does this shift in autonomy change how we understand the **ethics of self-care**?

4.2 The Legitimacy of Technology in Healing

Epistemologically, the advent of self-healing garments challenges the established medical paradigm, which is rooted in **scientific knowledge** and human expertise. While magnetic therapy and acupuncture have roots in traditional practices, their integration into wearable technology creates a new category of healing that blurs the lines between **alternative medicine** and **technology-driven healthcare**.

How should we evaluate the legitimacy of these technologies in the context of healing? Can they be considered equivalent to traditional healing practices, or are they simply a **commodification** of ancient techniques for profit-driven purposes? The shift towards automated healing challenges us to rethink how we validate **knowledge** about the body and its processes of repair and recovery.

5. The Social and Cultural Implications of Self-Healing Garments

The cultural impact of self-healing garments is equally significant. As wearables become more integrated into daily life, they begin to redefine what it means to be healthy. No longer must individuals seek out external interventions to heal; instead, they can wear their healing technology, making health a **personalized, on-demand** process. This shift may lead to a **democratization of health** by providing individuals with easy access to self-care tools, but it may also contribute to the **privatization of healthcare**, where individuals are responsible for their health without the support of professional communities.

Furthermore, the automation of healing could signal a larger societal trend toward **individualism** in health. If healing becomes increasingly automated and personalized, what happens to **communal health practices** or the **social dimension of well-being**? Self-healing garments may ultimately contribute to a shift away from the shared human experience of health, healing, and care.

6. Conclusion: Reconceiving the Body and Healing in a Technologically Mediated World

Magnetic acupuncture wearables, as self-healing garments, present a profound challenge to traditional conceptions of health, healing, and the body. They suggest a future in which healing is automated, embodied, and intimately tied to wearable technology. While these wearables offer exciting possibilities for self-care, they also raise critical philosophical questions about the **nature of embodiment, agency, and the role of technology** in health.

As we move forward into a world where health can be mediated by technology, it is essential to maintain a critical understanding of how these garments—and similar technologies—reshape our relationship to our bodies, our autonomy, and the very concept of healing itself.

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