

I Kinda Understand Ancestor Worship Now

I remember first hearing about the ancestor worship practiced in some world cultures. I was bemused – clearly this was a silly superstition – one of the sillier religious beliefs that wasn't mine.

But now the phenomenon of ancestor worship is starting to make a little more sense as I get older. Because as I get older, I realize what a scrap and what a fight life is. To get through most days takes courage. To get through a long life while keeping your character takes amazing strength.

I'm in awe of most people above the age of 80. I'm in awe of the people who end a life well-lived and leave behind a legacy. My grandfather and men like him touched the lives of so many people with the quality of their character. They survived epic challenges, from war to depression. They raised children and grandchildren. They continued to be benefactors of those around them to their deaths.

In short, our ancestors experienced nearly part and facet of what a human life can be. And if they did it well, they're the only people we *know* who have finished the hero's journey before us. That may not be worthy of worship but it's absolutely worthy of some reverence.

There is strength to be called from (good) ancestors, at least in memory and example. And if you have lived 80 years and people still love and respect you, you deserve a good clap (if not someone burning incense to you).