J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur’s views are as synonymous to me as a parent whose child is disobeying the rules and ruining every other student’s experience at school. The parent (Crevecoeur) believes that their child (America) is completely innocent of ever having done something wrong. In this metaphor, Crevecoeur is the parent of his country that keeps messing up everything, and the rest of the world knows the truth about the country, but he is too blindsided to see it. The fact that our country was built on disrespect, pain, and causing other people pain, is not influential to how he sees our country. He shows clearly that he knows that America has issues, but those do not affect him, and therefore, do not matter in his own opinions of what America is. He is the definition of white guilt.

He begins to discuss slavery later on in the piece, which gives a bit of light to the conversation in that I knew he thought slavery was wrong.

American life was effective in creating slavery, because the slaves technically were not considered people at that point in time. Crevecoeur grappled with this notion, continually questioning what it means to be a person. He asked himself if a “wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affiliation or pinching penury, can that man call England or any other kingdom his country?” (19). Asking this question shows that he is already a little bit more aware of society and those surrounding him than other people of that time. He understands that slavery is wrong. He understands that these people who are being forced into slavery have no place to call their home. Does that mean that he’s a good person—that he’s super woke, and totally understands the meaning of being an American? No! On the contrary, actually. He views America in such an idealized lens, that he doesn’t see that this is a problem with America. Somehow, all of that slavery that he so hated and spoke adamantly against, was no longer a factor as he described slaves as “mongrel breed, half civilized, half savage” people (25).

Overall, Crevecoeur’s connection and thoughts on the world around him have idealized and completely overtaken his
opinions about America. His moral compass says that slavery is wrong, but it’s ingrained in him since day one to call
slaves degrading names. He struggles internally over and over again about what’s right, what’s not right, and what he
should be standing up for. Crevecoeur is the definition of white guilt. He feels bad for what his people did to other
minorities and talks about it, but does not talk about it extensively, in order to save face. His empty claims about how
horrible racism is, how we shouldn’t stand for slavery, make it clear that he is apologetic when he has to be, but silent
when it’s convenient for him.