First Draft:

For me, no show recounts the pains, joys, and awkward moments of adolescence like “The Wonder Years.” As a kid, I could relate to no TV character as well as Kevin Arnold. I understood his struggle to fit in at school, the chemistry of his family, and his pensive reflections on the oftentimes grueling agony that makes up the middle school years. When Amanda Gardner rejected my invitation to the end of the year eighth grade dance and showed up with someone else, I found comfort in knowing that Kevin felt the same pain when Winnie Cooper dumped him for that cocky football jerk Roger. I disagreed with friends, and I told myself that time would fix everything, just like it did for Kevin and Paul. Wayne, Kevin’s obnoxious older brother, bore an uncanny resemblance to my younger brother. Kevin’s father, Jack, was often grumpy but still caring, just like my dad. His classmates were my classmates. His friends were my friends. His family was my family. And now, looking back on my own adolescent years, the title “The Wonder Years” seems more appropriate than ever.