Media reports indicate that Jahar told the FBI that following the Boston bombing along with his brother he had planned to drive to New York City to launch a second attack in Times Square. Investigators failed to find direct links between the Tsarnaev brothers and foreign terrorist groups although there is substantial evidence that they were inspired by online jihadist videos and postings.

A police investigation later connected Tamerlan to a triple homicide that took place on the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

An estimated twenty-five terrorist plots by homegrown terrorists had been foiled prior to the attack launched by the Tsarnaev brothers. The brothers' attack was the first large-scale domestic terrorist attack that had proven successful since the September 11 attacks. Experts on terrorism continue to speculate on why Jahar, whose extremist views undoubtedly are shared by other young Americans, decided to translate these views into a deadly attack.

Tamerlan already was a teenager when his family emigrated to the United States, and his speech was heavily accented. He abandoned his aspirations to be an Olympic boxer when he was disqualified from competition for taunting an opponent. Tamerlan fit the profile of a frustrated young migrant who is angered by the downward trajectory of his life in America and who finds comfort in religious fundamentalism. Zubeidat, Tamerlan's mother, who herself had become increasingly religious, encouraged Tamerlan to abandon his life in the "fast lane" and to turn to Islam. He became increasingly intolerant and militant, and at one point Tamerlan was arrested for domestic battery against his girlfriend who alleged that he pressured her to convert to Islam and to dress modestly. Tamerlan's outspoken condemnation of fellow Muslims in the mosque and his online interest in al Qaeda led to his being placed on U.S. and Russian terrorist watch lists. At one point, he traveled to Dagestan in an effort to join the Islamic resistance to the Russians. Married with a child, Tamerlan found himself unemployed and on public assistance and on the verge of being forced to vacate his apartment in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Jahar, on the other hand, was a formidable high school wrestler and popular with his peers at Cambridge Rindge and Latin high school in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was a volunteer in the "Best Buddies" program, became a U.S. citizen on September 11, 2012, and earned a $2,500 scholarship to the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth.

His friends described Jahar as "superchill," "smooth," "cool," and "always joking" and cannot recall him ever referring to his Islamic faith. He seemed to fit right into the diverse, politically progressive world of Cambridge. Jahar's tweets were the typical teenage mixture of immature observations and occasional philosophical reflections and were more concerned with wrestling and smoking marijuana than with Islam and politics.

Jahar's calm and controlled exterior was briefly broken on only one occasion when he proclaimed his anger over Americans' equation of Islam with terrorism. He argued that jihadist terrorism was justified because of the violence of U.S. foreign policy and tweeted that 9/11 was an "inside job."

Jahar beneath the surface was percolating with anger and frustration. Anzor, his father, was a lawyer who after arriving in the United States worked as a mechanic for $10 an hour and regularly erupted in anger. His frustration over the growing Americanization of his daughters Ailina and Bella led him to force them into arranged marriages. Anzor, depressed over his inability to support his family and opposed to Zubeidat's growing fundamentalism, returned to Russia. He divorced and later reconciled with Zubeidat who fled Boston after being arrested for shoplifting.

Jahar, although earning strong grades in high school, was disappointed over the fact that the elite private Boston colleges were beyond his financial means. He abandoned his aspiration of studying engineering after flunking most of his university classes. Jahar found himself heavily in debt from college and made money by selling marijuana.

Jahar created a Facebook page that describes his worldview as divided between "Islam" and a "career and money" and posted links to Islamic fighters. Jahar tweeted that the Prophet Muhammad was his role model and proclaimed "never underestimate the rebel with a cause."

In early February, Tamerlan drove to New Hampshire and purchased forty-eight mortars containing approximately eight pounds of low-explosive powder. He also bought nine-millimeter handguns along with two hundred rounds of ammunition. Jahar began downloading al Qaeda military manuals including an article on "Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom," which offered detailed instructions on how to construct a pressure cooker explosive.

On April 15, 2013, Jahar, wearing his high school wrestling jacket, ignited the bomb at the finish line of the Boston Marathon. Was the bombing a political statement or a product of personal frustrations? Why did Jahar bomb the Boston Marathon? In May 2015, a Boston jury determined that Jahar should receive the death penalty. Do you agree with the verdict?