

## **He was like an animal in the boxing ring - he was ready to kill: Sickening violent streak of bomber - as his family reveal beaten wife's sudden Islamic conversion**

- **Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, was shot dead during a gunfight with police**
- **He had fallen out with family members and was described as a 'manipulator' who they knew was 'up to no good'**
- **Had videos dedicated to terrorism and Jihad on his YouTube channel**
- **Previously said he doesn't 'understand' Americans**
- **Watched sermons by radical preacher linked to extreme brand of Islam**

By [Nick Craven](#)

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Olympic dream: The parents of the wife of Boston bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev yesterday spoke of their horror at the devastation caused by the man they 'never really knew'

The parents of the wife of Boston bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev yesterday spoke of their horror at the devastation caused by the man they 'never really knew'.

Like most Americans, Dr Warren Russell and his wife Judith are trying to comprehend how Tamerlan and his brother Dzhokhar could turn against a nation which took them in as refugees.

But for the Russells, the bafflement and anguish is all the more painful – given their knowledge of just how much their daughter Katherine had put into the relationship with Tsarnaev, who was shot dead on Friday morning.

As Judith said yesterday: 'In the aftermath of the Patriots' Day horror, we now know that we never really knew Tamerlan Tsarnaev.'

Katherine, 24, met promising athlete Tsarnaev, 26, at college in Boston – and not only married him and bore his daughter, Zahara, now three, but even converted from Christianity to Islam.

Katherine, who uses the surname Tsarnaev, converted while at Suffolk University in Boston four years ago. She was a student there between 2007 and 2010, but did not graduate.

Speaking from the quiet, leafy suburb of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, one neighbour of the Russells said: 'I knew Katherine was married and she had converted to Islam.

'She went away to college and when I next saw her she was dressed in the Islamic style. Her hair was covered and she was wearing very baggy clothing.

'I saw her with a man and I assumed he was her partner. They came up most weekends and had Massachusetts licence plates on their car, so I assumed they lived in Boston and came here at weekends to see her family.

'They were always together and had a little girl.'

However, the neighbour said the last time she saw Tsarnaev was a year ago, adding: 'Katherine moved back home and was living with the baby with her parents.'

Yesterday Katherine was with her family, including her sister Anna, after being interviewed by the FBI on Friday.

But the young mother was keeping herself and her daughter inside the house and away from the media.

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Judith Russell's emotional statement, read to the media outside the timber-framed detached family home, added: 'Our daughter has lost her husband today, the father of her child. We cannot begin to comprehend how this horrible tragedy occurred. Our hearts are sickened by the knowledge of the horror he has inflicted.'

The nurse then shook her head and said: 'There's nothing more to say.'

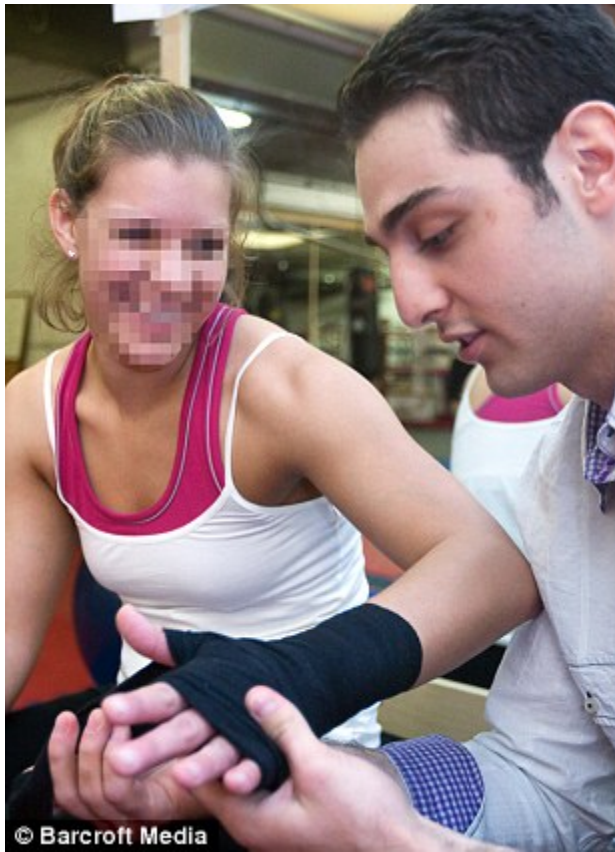
Yesterday a picture began to emerge of Tsarnaev as a young man who failed to fulfil his early potential as a gifted amateur boxer and found himself, despite his young family, increasingly isolated in his new homeland.



Shocked: Katherine Russell's mother Judith and this man, right, believed to be her father, Warren Russell



Athlete: Tamerlan Tsarnaev practices boxing at the Wai Kru Mixed Martial Arts center in April 2009 in Boston, Massachusetts



Dark past: Tamerlan, pictured in the gym in 2009, was arrested that year on suspicion of assaulting his girlfriend (not pictured)



Tamerlan was an avid boxer and spent a lot of time training for competitions, according to Johannes Hirn, who posted a photo essay entitled 'Will Box for Passport'

On internet postings a few years ago, he spoke of his love for movie comedy Borat (though he felt some of the jokes were 'a bit too much') and of his ambitions to box for the US Olympic team and become an American citizen.

But more recently, the devout Muslim began to harbour extremist views and appeared to hold a powerful influence over his younger brother.

Tamerlan espoused radical views online and posted the rantings of other extremists as well as videos praising Allah. He created a YouTube playlist titled 'Terrorists'.

He went online to buy a selection of books on how to make fake IDs and documents – and volumes about Chechnya's battle for independence from Russia.



Last December he returned to Chechnya and US authorities are now investigating whether he received military-style training to prepare him for his bomb attack.

A friend, named only as Sam, said: 'He was there for three or four months. I guess he came back a changed kid.'





Devastated: Anzor and Zubeidat Tsarnaev are distraught over their sons' actions, left, Anna Russell, right, is helping sister Katherine come to terms with her plight

It's a set-up: Mother of Boston bomb suspects speaks out





Convert: A woman believed to be Katherine Russell, the wife of Boston bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev outside her family's Rhode Island home today

‘He was my friend. When he was in the boxing ring he had a one-track mind and was ready to kill an opponent. He was an animal, an insane athlete. But outside of that he was a relaxed kid. He’d just chill with friends and smoke pot.’

Tsarnaev drove a silver Mercedes and wore fashionable clothes yet was known as a loner, drifting from job to job, at one stage delivering pizzas.

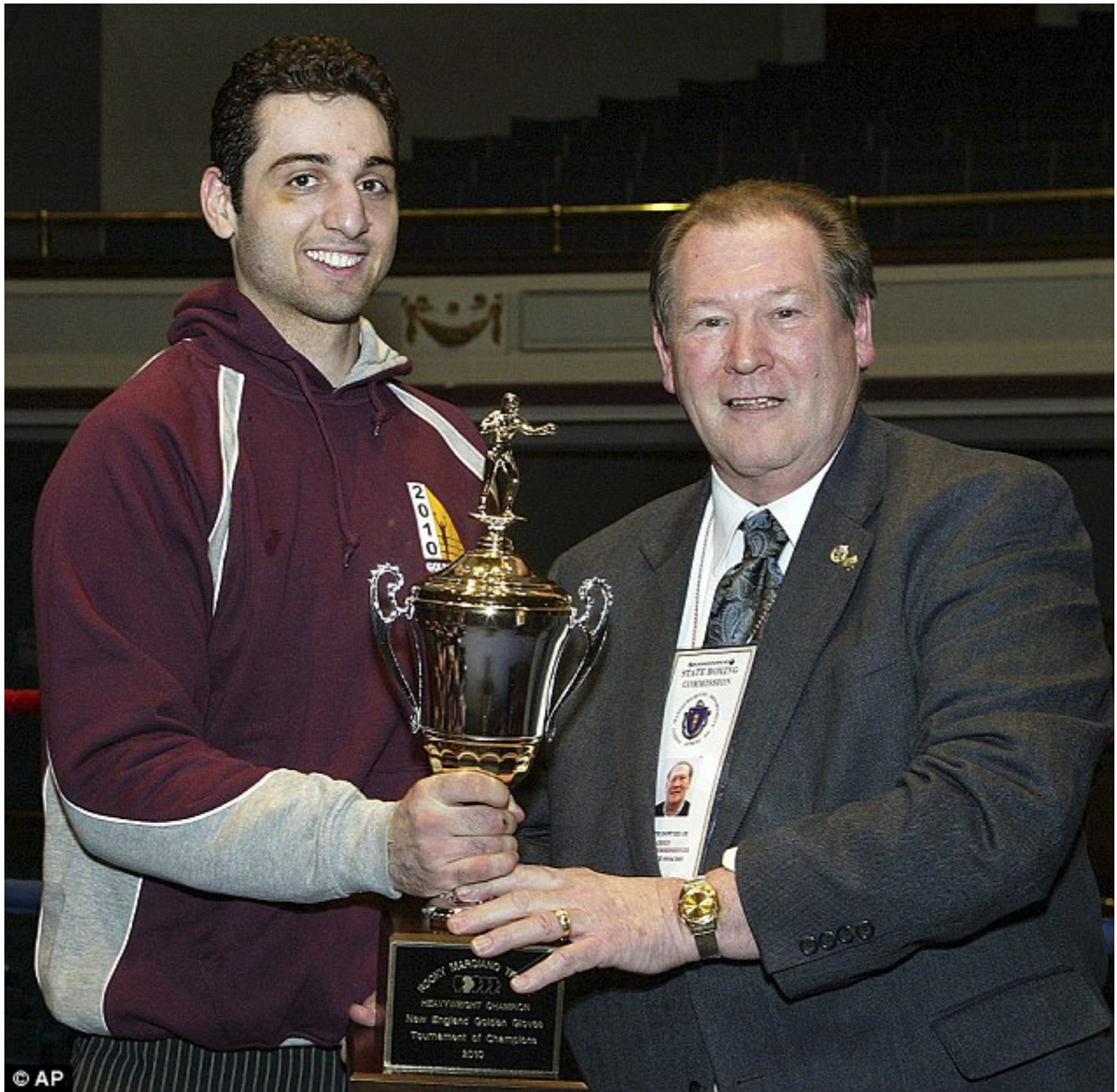
His serious interest in boxing tailed off after 2010 when he failed to win national honours at the prestigious Golden Gloves contest in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he represented New England. Before the contest, he spoke of his dream of being ‘selected for the US Olympic team and to be a naturalised American’.

‘Unless his native Chechnya becomes independent, Tamerlan says he would rather compete for the United States than for Russia,’ read the caption to one of the pictures in a series of promotional pictures for the event.

Writing on a boxing blog, Tamerlan said he had given up drinking and smoking because ‘God said no alcohol’ – and hinted that he disliked American attitudes.



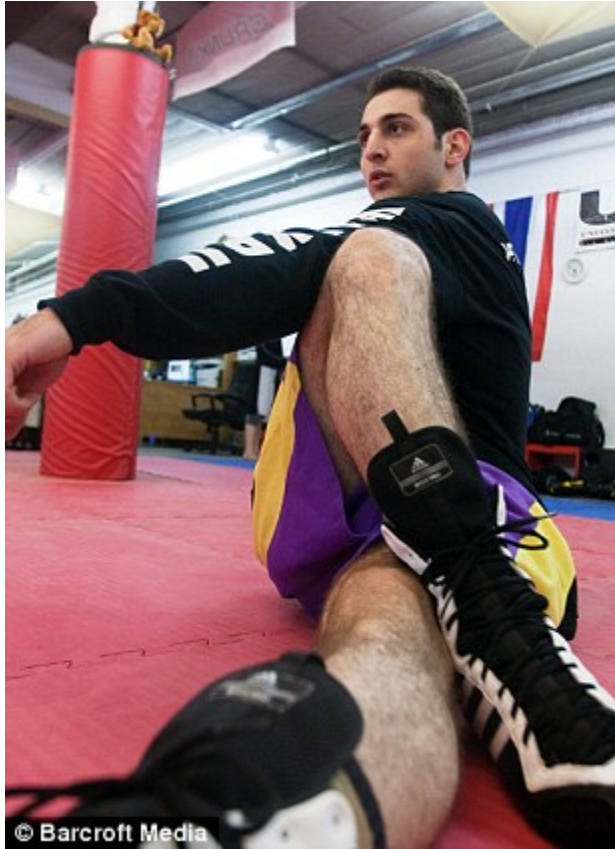
Band of brothers: Tamerlan Tsarnaev, fifth from left, top row, poses with his team at 2010 New England Golden Gloves Championship in Lowell, Mass.



Champ: In this Feb. 17, 2010, photo, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, left, accepts the trophy for winning the 2010 New England Golden Gloves Championship from Dr. Joseph Downes, right



Man of many talents: Besides boxing, Tamerlan (right) studied accounting, wanted to become an engineer and played the piano and violin



National identity: Tamerlan said in an article that unless Chechnya becomes independent, he would rather compete for the US than for Russia



American dream: Representing New England in 2010 National Golden Gloves competition in Utah, Tsarnaev said he wanted to be 'selected for the US Olympic team and be [a] naturalized American'

He said: 'There are no values any more, people can't control themselves.' Yet signs of his isolation were already appearing as he added: 'I don't have a single American friend. I don't understand them. I feel lost, like an island.'

In 2009 he was convicted of domestic violence against a woman, which would mean his application for US citizenship would later be rejected.

Around the same time, perhaps searching for an identity, he turned towards radical Islam and its hatred for the West, and in particular, the US. By 2011, the Russian government, alerted to his radical Islamist links, asked the FBI to investigate him. The US agency said it found 'nothing derogatory'.



Another clue to Tamerlan's radicalisation came from a series of videos he posted on YouTube. One of the radical Muslim sheiks he highlighted preached against the 'corrupting evils' of Harry Potter.



Quiet guy: Tamerlan's (left) former coach described him as a subdued, nice young man who kept to himself



Brute force: One former team member said that Tsarnaev was aggressive in bouts but showed little skill



Loner: Those who knew the 26-year-old from his boxing days said he would never spend time with his team members and at times had a bad attitude

For his younger brother Dzhokhar, brighter academically and by all accounts a more likeable and sociable young man, friends and relatives conclude it was hero worship of Tamerlan that lured him into taking part in the outrage.

John Curran, owner of Somerville Boxing Club in Boston, said: 'His younger brother would come to the gym with him, but he wouldn't box – he would do exercises. Dzhokhar idolised him.'

Curran said their father Anzor would sometimes come and watch – although their mother Zubeidat never appeared.

Cousin Zaur Tsarnaev, from their hometown in Makhachkala, Russia, said: 'I used to warn Dzhokhar that Tamerlan was up to no good. He was always getting into trouble.'

YouTube

Islam by Tamerlan Tsarnaev

Не смотри на все это, посещают эту страну некоторые личности известные в арабском и исламском мире, такие шейхи как Мшари Рашид Аль-Афаси из Куейта, и Абдуллах Басфар, известный чтец из Саудовской Аравии.

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Terrorists by Tamerlan Tsarnaev

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1 [Deleted Video]

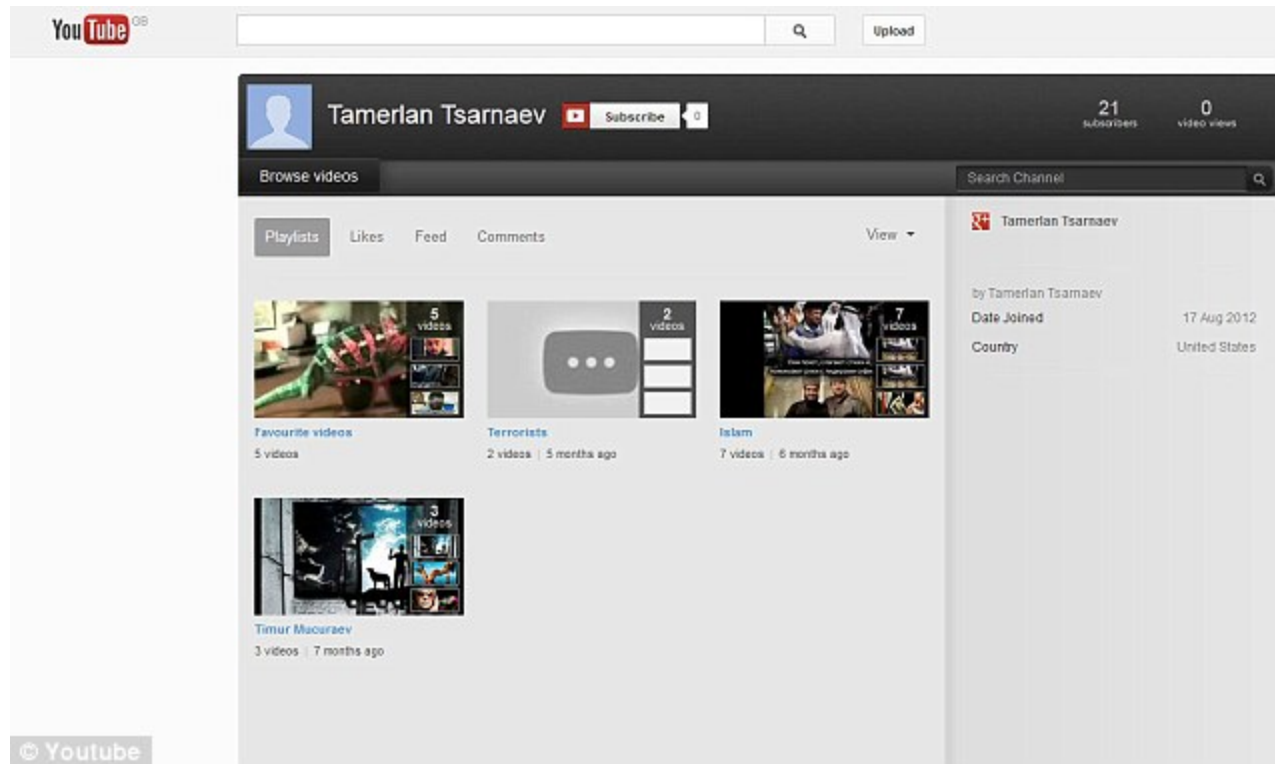
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About Tamerlan Tsarnaev

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Named simply 'Terrorists,' the playlist included a pair of videos, which are now no longer available



Troubling: Although most of the clips in the channel are ordinary music videos, among the songs was one called 'I will dedicate my life to Jihad'

The brothers' aunt Maret Tsarnaeva, who lives in Toronto, admitted that Tamerlan 'seemingly did not find himself yet in America, because it's not easy'.

Dzhokhar went to the Cambridge Rindge and Latin High secondary school and former classmates recalled 'a genuinely nice guy' keen on football and volleyball. He was also captain of the wrestling team.

'If you interacted with him, there's no way you couldn't like him,' said Derek Windbush, 18.

After leaving school Dzhokhar worked as a lifeguard at Harvard's Blodgett Pool, before being sacked last year for failing to turn up.

Yet in private, like his brother, Dzhokhar also posted extremist material online. And his profile on a Russian social network site tags Islam with a heart and includes a stick of dynamite in the 'gifts' section.

Despite all that, only last September – ironically enough on the very anniversary of 9/11 – Dzhokhar formally became an American citizen.

At the naturalisation ceremony, he stood with more than 2,500 immigrants to take the oath of US citizenship. He raised his right hand and promising to defend the Constitution and laws ‘against all enemies, foreign and domestic’.



Fighter: Counterterrorism officials believe Tamerlan and his brother had some military training



Tamerlan Tsarnaev (right) became a permanent US resident in 2007, about four years after seeking asylum in the US





Traditional values: While appearing like an all-American 20-something man, Tamerlan said in an interview that he is a devout Muslim who does not drink and upholds traditional values



New twist: Tsarnaev flew in and out of John F. Kennedy Airport last year and was out of the country for six months



Pugilist: Tamerlan trained at this Waikru Mixed Martial Arts boxing gym in Massachusetts



Pursuing education: Tamerlan Tsarnaev studied accounting part-time at Bunker Hill Community College

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2312270/He-like-animal-boxing-ring--ready-kill-Sickening-violent-streak-bomber--family-reveal-beaten-wifes-sudden-Islamic-conversion.html>