



**NIKKI LEVY**



# BIOGRAPHY

Nikki Levy is the host and creator of the award-winning comedy event Don't Tell My Mother! where celebrities and emerging artists tell true stories they'd never want their moms to know. From sold out events, to top rated Audible specials and a star-studded podcast, Don't Tell My Mother! was born nearly a decade ago as a labor of love and has emerged as a bona fide global brand.

Don't Tell My Mother! is a magnet for celebrities waiting to bare their souls to Levy with guests that include Tracee Ellis Ross, Ali Wong, Hasan Minhaj, Kate McKinnon, Teri Hatcher, Bobby Berk from Netflix's "Queer Eye," "Schitt's Creek" star Emily Hampshire, YouTube stars Gigi Gorgeous and Eugene Lee Yang, Angela Kinsey, Fortune Feimster, Jake Borelli, Diona Reasonover and many more. Levy serves as host and performer at every show with stories ranging from "Nikki Ménage" about a threesome gone comedically wrong to "Ice Ice Baby" detailing her journey to find a sperm donor and freeze her embryos.

At the forefront of progressive voices, Levy originally launched Don't Tell My Mother! as a live show in Los Angeles and has since expanded to cities across the United States. She has released two specials with Audible (the leader in spoken word entertainment); the first entitled "The Path to Pride with Lance Bass and Nikki Levy" in 2018 and "You Do You: Proud to Be Fabulous" alongside Tan France in 2019. The specials were such a hit, Audible commissioned a third, "Coming Out Party: A Pride Celebration" which was released June 4, 2020 and co-hosted by "RuPaul's Drag Race" star Shangela. It was a best-seller on Audible in its first week.

A longtime development executive in film and television, Levy has had an impressive career in Hollywood, currently serving as the Head of Scripted Content for DreamWorksTV where she makes kids and family shows at NBC Universal. Prior to that, she ran a production company at Fox Animation and served as Director of Development at Imagine Entertainment where she helped oversee the Academy Award nominated FROST/NIXON. Given her years developing scripted comedies, Levy decided to use her development skills and 10,000+ hours on the shrink's couch to coach performers on their real-life stories, digging into the pain and unearthing the comedy. Thus, Don't Tell My Mother! was born. Celebrities often call it "creative therapy" and have dubbed Levy "The Story Whisperer" for her unique gift of getting at the truth and finding the funny.

Whether it is through the live show, podcast, or Audible specials, Don't Tell My Mother! brings people together to celebrate their collective dysfunction, proving that no matter who we are, our stories are our superpower, and sharing them frees us all.

As an out lesbian, Levy's passion for giving a megaphone to marginalized voices extends beyond comedy to philanthropy. Each Don't Tell My Mother! show benefits a different non-profit. Previous partners include The Los Angeles LGBT Center, The Trevor Project, Free Mom Hugs, Planned Parenthood and The People Concern.

A native New Yorker, Levy graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in Radio/TV/Film and Creative Writing for the Media. She currently lives in Los Angeles with her wife, their rescue pit bull and tuxedo cat. Oh, and Levy notes: her mother knows everything!



# PROJECTS



## FEATURING:



Coming Out Party, produced especially for Pride Month in collaboration with the acclaimed live show Don't Tell My Mother!, brings Audible members a collection of uplifting, raw, and hilarious stories from queer actors, comedians, and personalities. Cohosted by beloved drag queen Shangela and storytelling maven Nikki Levy, Coming Out Party is a joyous celebration of LGBTQIA+ people and personalities.

**VISIT THE AUDIBLE SPECIAL:**

<https://www.audible.com/pd/Coming-Out-Party-Audiobook/B0898CK44Z>



# PROJECTS



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[@donttellmymother](https://www.instagram.com/donttellmymother)



[@DontTellMyMother](https://www.facebook.com/DontTellMyMother)



[@DTMMshow](https://twitter.com/DTMMshow)



[Don't Tell My Mother](https://www.youtube.com/Don'tTellMyMother)

**VISIT THE SERIES:**

<https://www.donttellmymother.com/>

# BUZZ: “COMING OUT PARTY”



## THE BUZZ

### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

***Great Celebration of PRIDE!***

“The stories are heart felt as well as hilarious. It is a great celebration of the diversity of people and how each of us is unique in our own right! Love Nikki Levy and Shangela!”

***Funny and Enlightening***

“This book was fresh and funny. full of candid experiences that were relatable and heart felt.”

***Loved it!***

“As a straight, middle-aged white mother of 3 beautiful children, I need to hear stories like these. My children are all straight, but I want to be open and ready in case I meet someone who needs to be encouraged to be themselves, no matter what that looks like. These stories made me cheer and made me cry for each of them, I would love to know each of them!”

***Funny, touching, and revealing short memoirs.***

“This was a great way to celebrate Gay Pride Month. A collection of short memoirs told by the individuals themselves, Coming Out Party is filled with some funny and touching stories from some well known people who share part of their journey on coming out as LGBTQ. Happy Pride y'all!”

***Fun, playful shorts on LGBTQ coming out stories***

“Light stories with timely references to the pandemic. Some famous people share their stories. I enjoyed it!”

***Great way to spend an hour***

“The stories are real and perfect for this month. Excellent hosts. Give it a listen.”

***Human stories of growth, triumph, and the weird process in between***

“Relatable for every single person regardless of how you identify, that’s what I love most about the stories. You’ll laugh, you’ll smile, you might cry (if you are a cryer like me) but there is just such great humanity in every story.”

***So good!***

“A breath of fresh air. What a celebration of the LGBTQ community. It was sometimes heartbreaking but mostly just a joyful listen.”

***Loved!***

“Funny, gritty, vulgar and over the top. I LOVED everything about this! All I can say is 'I want more!'.”



## NIKKI LEVY ON THE FIRST TIME SHE SAW HERSELF REPRESENTED ON SCREEN

**Nikki Levy**

Creator, *Don't Tell My Mother!*

"The first time I saw myself (a feminine lesbian) was watching *Rent* at the Shubert Theater in Chicago in 1997. I was studying at Northwestern University, and I had just come out as 'liking girls' to my two best friends, Brian and Steven, who were also coming out. Brian's boss surprised us with front-row tickets to *Rent*, the famed Broadway show that had just come to Chicago from New York City. I heard it contained (whispers) gay themes. As a newly-out kid, I wanted gay ANYTHING. From the moment the curtain went up, every cell in my little queer body started shooting rainbows. Joanne and Maureen had a brief kiss at the end of 'La Vie Boheme,' but it was their sexy, seductive push and pull in the iconic duet 'Take Me or Leave Me' that put me over the edge. That love, that longing, those sexy dance moves. God, I was such a baby dyke! The next week, I took my student loan money and bought another ticket to the show. Joanne and Maureen, I'll love you forever."



<https://www.etonline.com/lgbtq-stars-on-the-first-time-they-saw-themselves-represented-on-screen-exclusive-148496>



## NIKKI LEVY ON WHAT PRIDE MEANS AMID THE PANDEMIC AND PROTESTS

**Nikki Levy**

Creator, *Don't Tell My Mother!*

"My wife and I got married last August. We had 100 people in our backyard with a fabulous rabbi and a kickass Boba bar. My wife never wanted a big wedding. She wanted a private ceremony, with just us and an officiant. It took me 40 years to find this beautiful woman, so I wanted to shout it from the rooftops with hundreds of people and a banging party. My wife is an introvert, and I am an extrovert, if that wasn't clear. As we do with everything, we found a compromise. We eloped on the beach in Malibu last April -- just us and an officiant she found on Google the night before. We told no one. Then, six months later, we had a big party and got married again at our house. Everyone thought it was the first time. Now, being home nearly 24/7 for three months, she and I are so grateful we got to have our best friends and family here to celebrate our love, and our equality under the law. We took that gathering for granted not even a year ago. Today, we know it was a gift. That is Pride to us."

<https://www.etonline.com/wilson-cruz-shangela-and-more-on-what-pride-means-amid-the-pandemic-and-protests-148246>

## This Is What Pride Looks Like in 2020



The music in the streets and the roar of the parade. The confetti-covered sidewalks and glitter stuck to your skin for weeks. The boozy brunches that become dance parties. The icons. The events. The outfits. The rainbows that arc across the world and flags shimmying in the breeze. The people: laughing, crying, singing. These are some memories that snap to mind when we think about Pride. But, of course, this year will look different.

In 2020, people will experience Pride in places just beginning to reopen or where everyone is still staying home because of the pandemic. They will mourn all we've lost and protest for a better future. The commemoration of Pride is collective; the way it will be observed is as diverse and beautiful as the community itself. Below, people across America share their plans and reflections. And the one thing that has not changed at bit? We are all in this together.

"Since most people assume I'm straight, I take every opportunity to make my sexuality known by saying 'my wife' or 'as a gay woman.' I spent my entire childhood and much of my adulthood embarrassed about who I was. I am owning my beautiful, awkward, silly, queer self."



### NIKKI LEVY HOSTS HER NEW AUDIBLE SPECIAL, 'COMING OUT PARTY'



"Being a gay woman, it's always been important for me to showcase LGBTQ+ stories," Levy, who produced the special, tells *PRIDE*. "Growing up, so many of us tried to pretzel ourselves into what we were 'supposed to be' that we became amazing performers just to get by. There's a feeling so many of us have of watching the world from the outside and keeping the real stories locked up inside. Well, it's 2020 baby and it's time to let them out."

<https://www.pride.com/comingout/2020/5/29/our-fave-lgbtq-celebs-share-their-coming-out-stories-new-special>





## Popular show ‘Don’t Tell My Mother!’ to release Pride-themed show with LGBTQ+ celebs on Audible



The popular live comedy event “Don’t Tell My Mother!” is releasing a one-of-a-kind pride show online.

The show was created by Nikki Levy, a Park Slope native who knew that she wanted to work in entertainment from the time she was a kid. A Northwestern University grad, Levy got her start working for the Oxygen Network in their digital program. Eventually, she moved out to Los Angeles and had to start over.

<https://www.amny.com/entertainment/popular-show-dont-tell-my-mother-to-release-pride-themed-show-with-lgbtq-celebs-on-audible/>



## Nikki Levy and Shangela talk Pride, protest and Coming Out Party on Audible



Pride season is upon us, and even though things are a little different this year, that doesn't mean there's not still something to celebrate.

In honor of Pride Month, Nikki Levy paired up with Audible for *Coming Out Party: A Pride Celebration*, where she and co-host Shangela, the drag superstar of *RuPaul's Drag Race* fame, chat with other celebs all about their coming out stories. You'll get to hear hilarious and heartwarming tales from LGBTQ stars like Angelica Ross, Nicky Paris, Jake Borelli and more.

<https://fansided.com/2020/06/04/nikki-levy-shangela-interview-coming-out-party-audible/>





## Exclusive Interview: Pop-Culturalist Chats with Nikki Levy



**P-C: How did you get started in this industry?**

Nikki: I'm from Queens, New York. I always loved movies. I had a huge crush on Eddie Murphy. Like huge. My favorite movie was *Coming to America*. On his thirtieth birthday, I sent him a birthday card. I was eleven or twelve at the time. He sent me back an autographed picture that said, "Peace and love, Eddie Murphy."

I went to Sears in Manhasset and I bought a very expensive twenty-dollar frame. I still have it to this day. It's in my house. I love him, I love movies, and I love comedy. I used movies to escape from my absolutely dysfunctional, crazy household growing up.

### Tell Your Truth – An Interview with Coming Out Party's Nikki Levy



Pride season is upon us, and while things are vastly different this year the love, spirit and message of Pride will NEVER stop.

In honor of Pride Month, Nikki Levy has partnered with Audible for ***Coming Out Party: A Pride Celebration***, where she and co-host Shangela, the Hallelo superstar from *RuPaul's Drag Race* fame, talk with other celebrities from all walks of life about their coming out stories.





## "Be Fri"

*When Nikki Levy finally owned her sexuality, she noticed other things about herself that she had kept hidden for fear of seeming awkward or weird. Sharing her secrets helped set her free.*

I grew up in a hoarder house with a mom who drove a car held together by duct tape, and grass waving six feet high on the lawn. Oh, and I was gay.

Well, I didn't know the word for it then. I just knew I had a mad crush on Stephanie Schwartz. In 7th grade, I saw her underwear lying on the locker room floor and desperately wanted to sniff it, study it, and wear it as a hat.

Stephie and I were friends, but I wanted to be her best friend; the one to wear the other half of her "Best Friends" necklace. Oh, to "Be Fri."

Stephie was Jewish and cool in her crisp, white Keds. I was Jewish and (did I mention the duct tape?) rocked crisp, white Neds. They were \$10 at the local Walgreens.

One day, Stephanie and I were both home from school sick, so our parents let us be home sick together in her little apartment in Queens. We were playing cards on her bedroom floor, when she leaned over and shouted, "War!" The v-neck of her white tee fell just enough for me to catch sight of her boobs. They were MESMERIZING! She had the biggest tatas in our whole grade and I couldn't take my eyes off of them! I finally looked away, hoping she didn't notice, but she caught my gaze, and gave me this look like, "Get out." A chill ran through my body.

## NEW NOW NEXT

### Audible's "The Path to Pride" with Lance Bass and Nikki Levy

To celebrate Pride month, NSYNC's, Lance Bass, and *Don't Tell My Mother!* creator, Nikki Levy, have hosted a special Audible Original called *The Path to Pride*, that features the coming out tales of Levy, Bass, Frank DeCaro (*The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*), and Zeke Smith (*Survivor: Millennials vs. Gen X* and *Survivor: Game Changers*). The release is available through the end of July for free.

We spoke with *The Path to Pride* host, Levy, about her own tale of coming out:

If you could come out to your mother all over again, would you have it happen the same way or would you imagine it differently?

Levy: When I came out to my mom, I was 17. We were in the car eating White Castle burgers and I had to tell her.... "Mom, I think I like girls!" "Oh no you don't. You were just really close to Grandma Levy and have a bad relationship with Daddy" [her mother replied]. That is exactly what happened when I came out to my mom. If I wanted to be a completely boring adult, then yes! I would have loved her to say, "That's great sweetie! We had a feeling when you started collecting flashlights at a young age. And we had confirmation when we caught you sniffing Stephanie Goldberg's underpants." But that never would have happened. We're Jewish, my mother believes everything is her fault!



<http://www.newnownext.com/audibles-the-path-to-pride-with-lance-bass-and-nikki-levy/06/2018/>



### Don't Tell My Mother! Creator Tells Her Mother Everything

In October 2011, Nikki Levy was 34 and had just broken up with her girlfriend. Her life, she says, was "no bueno." Levy, a film and TV producer who most recently worked at Fox, figured her life would be great again if she moved back to her native New York City.

But before packing her bags, Levy decided to do *Don't Tell My Mother!*, a live comedy event she had been kicking around in her head. At a little theater on Fairfax Boulevard in Hollywood, she told the story of accidentally stumbling into a sex party in Brooklyn, N.Y.

She cancelled her plans to move back East that very night.

*"My life changed," Levy recalls. "A room full of people were laughing at my misfortune, relating to its ridiculousness and generally commiserating with my embarrassment. Something clicked."*

Levy had always been told she was "too much, too loud, too inappropriate." But with *Don't Tell My Mother!*, she had created a space where it was appropriate to be inappropriate—not only for herself but for actors, standup comics and other performers.

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/dont-tell-my-mother-creat\\_b\\_7226884](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/dont-tell-my-mother-creat_b_7226884)



## ADVOCATE

### Tell Your Mother: Performers Answer 10 Coming-Out Questions

Deciding whether to come out as LGBT to friends and family is an intensely personal decision. However, it may be a light at the end of a dark tunnel of denial, fear and shame, as it was for Don't Tell My Mother! performers, who will share their stories Friday to benefit the Los Angeles LGBT Center.

The Advocate fired off a couple of emails to performers Lance Bass, Jill Sobule, Dan Bucatinsky, and Nikki Levy to get their best advice on coming out. When trapped in the closet, sometimes all it takes is knowing someone else stepped out and survived and thrived afterward.



<https://www.advocate.com/coming-out/2016/10/11/tell-your-mother-performers-answer-10-coming-out-questions>

## VARIETY



### Art or Commerce? Some Execs Balance Both

By day, Nikki Levy develops and produces features as VP at Fox's Wedge Works banner. By night, she works with some of the same writers on a monthly comedy showcase she founded and hosts called Don't Tell My Mother.

"I realized that I know all these fabulous screenwriters who might like a more personal medium in which to express themselves," says Levy, who launched the L.A.-based series in October 2011 with co-producer Lizzie Czerner that presents mom-related tales of dysfunction. "I see drafts and give notes just like I do at Wedge Works."

<https://variety.com/2013/film/people-news/art-or-commerce-some-execs-balance-both-1200562296/>

# PRESS: ON CAMERA



<https://cheddar.com/media/comedian-nikki-levy-hosts-coming-out-party-with-shangela>



<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=585195922104045>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1xC3YIBJ9k&feature=youtu.be>



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