

What is the relation between altruism and animal rights?

Altruism is helping another without any regard for what is in it for yourself.

Because we can make animals happy, altruism seems to allow us to be kind to animals. In consistent Altruistic thinking, animals are allowed to be happy for they are not free agents and can't be altruistic. If there is a choice between making a higher animal happy and making a person happy making the animal happy would be preferred because you know the happiness cannot do the animal any ethical harm for it probably has no free will or ability to be altruistic itself. But you are not so sure of the human person and inducing altruism in the person is more important than their happiness. Happiness could corrupt the person so giving it to an animal instead of a person would be approved. Also, the animal has a shorter life than a human being and so would deserve more happiness than a human would for a human lives long enough to take care of themselves.

Altruists, of course, deny what logic says. Even they don't want animal welfare preferred to that of people. That is a testimony to their hypocrisy. They would have to deny that animals should ever be considered at all to salvage their altruistic philosophy. Vets would be carrying out an immoral career. But vets make people happy by looking after their livestock and pets. Altruists would have a problem with that for it teaches that self-sacrifice for people is a duty which implies that self-sacrifice for animals is a perversion and shouldn't be honoured.

Some altruists believe that animals are naturally happy so they need no help from us. It would seem that if you want to avoid accusing God of not providing for them you would have to assume that!

If animals are inferior to us and the altruist should be loved and cherished for being altruistic then what if the altruist only helps animals? Many would say she is warped and not a true altruist for altruists only look after people.